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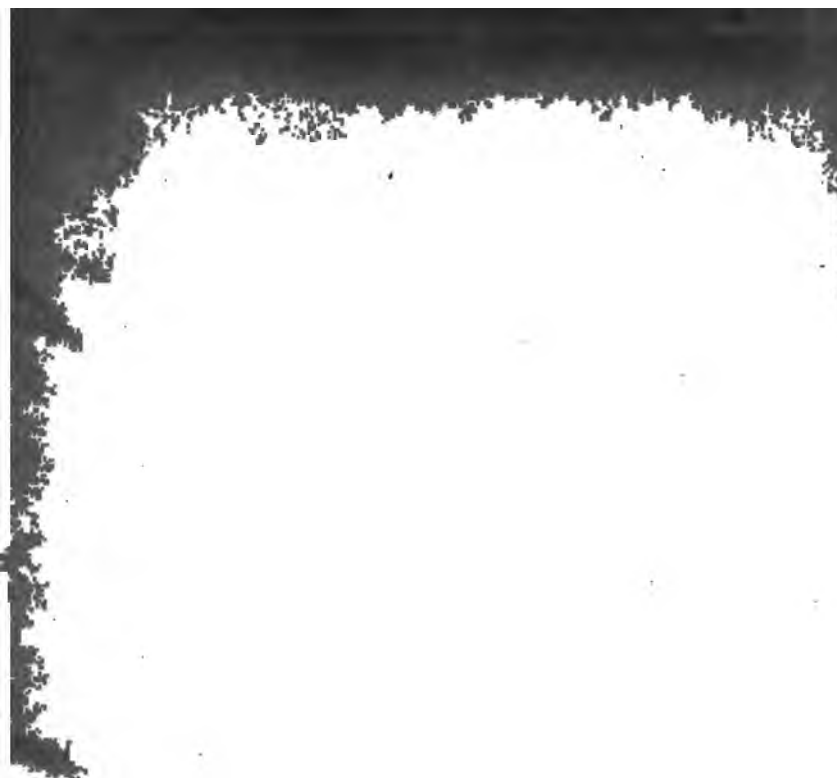


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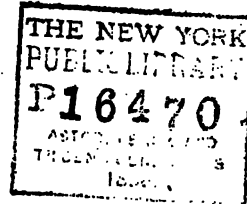






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# **Authentic Report,**

OF THE

**MEETING**

OF THE

**Reformation Society,**

AT

**CARLOW,**

AND

**THE DISCUSSION**

WHICH TOOK PLACE

ON THE 18TH & 19TH OCTOBER.

**SECOND EDITION.**

**Carlow :**

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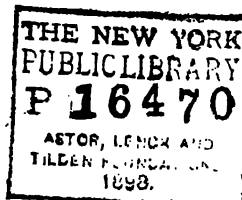
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# REPORT,

&c.



## FIRST DAY.

THIS most important and interesting Meeting was advertised, and announced by Placards, several days before it took place; so that many persons of rank and respectability came into Carlow on the night previous to the Meeting, from the adjoining Queen's County, as also from those of Kilkenny, Kildare, and Wicklow. So great was the anxiety for Tickets, that Letters were received by the Distributor, through the Post-office, requesting that places might be secured for several Families of distinction.

At an early hour on Thursday morning, the Methodist Chapel was crowded, and, at One o'clock, the EARL of ALDBOROUGH, having been unanimously called upon, consented to take the Chair, and the business of the day commenced.

Captain Gordon, who attended as one of the deputation from the Parent Society, rose and said—

My Lord—I feel that I owe something like an apology to your Lordship and the present respectable Meeting, for the prominent part which I have felt it my duty to take in the proceedings of the day; but the reason, I trust, will be satisfactorily explained by the Resolution which I shall presently have the honor to submit. That Resolution proposes, that a Society shall be formed in Carlow, auxiliary to the “British Society for promoting the religious principles of the Reformation,” and I need scarcely remark that such a Resolution implies a knowledge of the constitution and objects of the Parent Society. These it becomes my duty, as one of its representatives, to explain to your Lordship and the meeting. When I look around, my Lord, upon the present numerous and most respectable assemblage, and ask myself the question, what it was which brought them together?—and when I discover that it was neither an Act of Legislative or of Ecclesiastical, or of Magisterial authority—when I discover that it was simply the intimation of a proposal to attempt the spiritual benefit of their neighbours and fellow countrymen—then, my Lord, I am reminded that I stand on British soil; I am reminded that I speak and act under the influence of a Constitution which is founded upon the principles of Scripture and the rights of conscience. We have lived, my Lord, to witness the development of a new principle in society—the principle, I mean, of voluntary association. This principle has armed the christian

and the philanthropist with new and unlimited powers of action, and would seem to be carrying us back to the age of miracles, by the simple means of a penny a week subscriptions. This principle, my Lord, has established in our privileged empire the most stupendous moral machinery which the earth ever sustained. it has given birth to one Institution which, in the course of little more than twenty years, has collected nearly a million and a half of money, and published and sent forth from its almost innumerable auxiliaries, upwards of five millions of copies of the Scriptures in not fewer than one hundred and forty different languages. This principle has opened, through the channel of Missionary Societies, a free communication between the bosom of every individual of every Christian denomination and the heathen world, and realized to our contemplation the sublime truth, that the sun never sets on the labours of British Missionaries. But the principle of voluntary association has not merely given free play to the energies of our national christianity—it has established the godly fabrick of our religious institutions, not upon the authority of a College for the propagation of the faith—nor upon an edict of the national legislature; but upon the judgments, the hearts, the affections, and the prayers of millions of voluntary contributors. The birth place, my Lord, of this principle, is liberty of conscience. We are indebted for its existence to the unfettered exercise of our judgments as rational and morally accountable beings, and as cause and effect mutually act and react on each other, we would now enlist the principle in behalf of conscience. It is to the Reformation as a cause that we are beholden for the existence of the principle—it is in the cause of the Reformation that we are now anxious to employ the discovery. The Society, my Lord, which I have now the honour to represent, is an association of individuals voluntarily united together for the purpose of promoting the religious principles of the Reformation; and one of its principal objects is to publish to the Roman Catholic inhabitants of this country, their right to the free and unrestricted use of the Word of God. It comes to tell them that as Irishmen, as British subjects, as professing Christians, and as morally accountable beings, they are entitled to the great Magna Charta of Salvation, and that every believer in the God of Revelation is personally entitled to the Revelation of God. It comes to tell them that every part of this Revelation is the gift of God to his accountable creatures, unshackled in the delivery by any condition or qualification whatever. It comes to tell them that the message which was originally inscribed by the finger of the Deity on stone and transferred to the door posts of Israel's habitations—which was registered upon plastered obelisks elevated on a mountain, as the beacon lights which were to guide that nation on its journey to eternity—which was proclaimed by Isaiah to the four winds in the language of "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken"—which was uttered by Jeremiah in the streets of a crowded

city—which was preached by the Saviour from the top of a mountain, and addressed by his successors “to all that in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus.” It comes to tell them, that this message is addressed to Irishmen also. But the Society would tell them, that it is not merely the right and the privilege of the poor to possess the Scriptures—it would tell them that their Saviour has commanded they should search the Scriptures, and that the Scriptures which they are commanded to search, are the same which shall judge them at the last day. But more, my Lord, the Society would tell them, that they are not merely entitled to the possession of the record of redemption, and commanded to read it, but that they are also entitled to the free and unfettered exercise of their own reason, in the understanding of what they read. It would call upon them, in the language of the Spirit, to “prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.” It would point them to the example of the Bereans, who were more noble than they of Thessalonica, because they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether the things taught them by an inspired Apostle agreed with the standard of unerring truth. It would tell them, that they are individually constituted the judges of what they read—that they are to compare the doctrines taught them with the inspired oracles of God, and if an angel from heaven should preach to them another gospel than that which was preached by Jesus Christ and his Apostles, they should reject his ministry and his mission. But, my Lord, the Reformation Society goes a step farther: it professes to contrast the doctrines which are believed by the Roman Catholic population of this country with the revealed will of God. It holds up to the unprejudiced understanding the contrast between the doctrine of the Mass and the divine declaration, that the blessed Redeemer, “by one offering, hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” It contrasts the doctrine of purgatory with the declaration, that “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” It contrasts the doctrine of saintly intercession and mediatorship with the declaration, that “there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” It contrasts the doctrine of image worship with the declaration, “thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them.” It would endeavour, my Lord, to direct the guilt-burthened sinner from the feet of a guilt-burthened sinner like himself, to hear him who hath said “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Finally, it would seal up the confessional; and unveil the glories of that sanctuary, where Jesus our High Priest “is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins.”—Capt. Gordon then entered into a long and particular statement of the Society’s plan and objects. The following are the

#### OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY.

1. To enable Clergymen, and others engaged in promoting the Reformation in Ireland, to purchase such quantities of Bibles, Testaments, and Tracts, as the increasing wants of their respective parishes and districts may require.

II. To supply individuals and associations with the means of circulating such instruction and information as may best meet the present circumstances of Ireland.

III. To enable the friends of the Reformation to defray the expenses incurred by Meetings for religious discussion, and by the publication of their proceedings, for which no Society at present provides.

IV. To collect and circulate authentic intelligence respecting the progress of the Reformation.

V. To promote such modes of instruction as are best suited to the condition of the lower orders of the Roman Catholics throughout the Empire.

Capt. Gordon concluded by moving the following resolution :—  
“ That this Meeting cordially approves of the objects and constitution of the ‘ British Society for promoting the religious principles of the Reformation,’ and that a Society be now formed in aid of its views, and designated the ‘ Carlow Auxiliary to the British Society for promoting the Religious principles of the Reformation.’”

The Rev. Robert Fishbourne.—My Lord—In rising to second the Resolution which has just been read, I do not wish to content myself with the simple act of expressing my assent to it, without for a short time occupying your attention and that of this meeting, with some remarks upon the subject which has brought us together. An exceedingly clear detail of the objects of the Parent Society has already been submitted to you by the respected gentleman who has last addressed you ; it would therefore be presumption in me to attempt to add any thing to what has been so fully and so eloquently explained, with respect to the “ British Society for promoting the religious principles of the Reformation.” There may, perhaps, my Lord, be some individuals present who do not know what the Reformation means : for their instruction it may be necessary to say, that it alludes to that change which has taken place in the Church of Christ, when she was reformed from the errors which Popery had heaped upon her. These corruptions had increased to such an enormous magnitude, that in the beginning of the 16th century, Pope Leo X. who added extravagance and ambition to his other faults, set on foot the sale of indulgencies when his treasury was exhausted. John Tetzel, a Dominican Friar, was entrusted with the traffic in Germany in 1517, and he had the daring impiety to declare that he saved more souls from hell by the sale of indulgencies, than St. Peter by his preaching converted to christianity : and he had even the blasphemous audacity to say, that if any committed a crime against the Mother of God, which he was not ashamed to mention, but which I should blush to name, he was able to forgive him. It was this unparalleled effrontery which roused the righteous indignation of the Germans, and God was pleased to make use of the preaching of Luther, an Augustinian Friar, to bring about in his Church the so much needed Reformation.—Roman Catholics in this country endeavour to deny this sale of indulgencies, but travellers assure us that little difficulty is experienced in purchasing them ; and it is notorious, that during the late Jubilee, bills were posted on different Churches in the city of Rome, announcing “ Indulgencies to be had here.” But, for the satisfaction of my hearers, I beg to exhibit before their own eyes an Indulgence which was procured in Rome by a gentleman of this county.

His own name is specified in the body of the indulgence and all his relatives to the third degree, to whom a plenary indulgence is given under certain conditions: and you may perceive in this column numbers set down, and places left where may be inserted the names of any fifty of his friends, to whom whatever benefit the article can confer is also to extend.—This Society then, my Lord, would seek to extend the religious principles of the Reformation, and to establish within Ireland a true liberty of conscience, a liberty for every man, without injury to himself or his property, to profess whatever religion he pleases, provided he discharges the duties of a peaceable subject—and it would endeavour to reform that system which studies to keep the people in ignorance; and which by denunciations from the altar, by defaming the characters of converts, by secret and by sometimes open persecution, would terrify every individual who dares to judge for himself in that which concerns his everlasting interests, or who would presume in matters of religion to exercise that reason which a merciful God has bestowed on him to distinguish him from a brute, and for which he shall account hereafter. My Lord, it calls on the Protestant community, especially the gentry, upon whom attaches so vast a responsibility, to come forward boldly to rescue their fellow-countrymen from their thralldom, and uniting into a body for mutual counsel and encouragement, thus to take off whatever odium might fall upon any individual who seeks to forward the cause of Reformation. It has been said, with what pretensions to truth I shall not stop to consider, that there are at present seven millions of Roman Catholics in this country. It is an awful thought, to reflect how many of these are daily passing on to eternity, and standing in the presence of an offended God. And may I ask, are there not many thousands of them who are in the deepest ignorance; who know nothing of the name of Jesus, which sounds so sweet in a believer's ear, but to bow the knee in outward reverence at the repetition of the name? Are there not many who are deprived of his blessed word, and know nothing of him but what they learn from a painted likeness or a graven image, before which they bow in prostrate adoration? And shall we then, upon whom the light of God's truth in some degree has shone, not exert ourselves in their behalf? Shall not we, whom God in his mercy has made to differ, endeavour as far as he gives us the ability, to enlighten the understandings of our fellow-countrymen, and confer on them those great privileges which the religious principles of the Reformation have bestowed on ourselves? When we see on this platform, my Lord, persons much more competent to the task than I am, it cannot be looked upon in me as an affectation of humility if I say I shall leave the statement of the more important objections to the Church of Rome in abler hands than mine. I shall leave to them the religious part of the subject, and taking the more humble part, remark briefly upon the temporal evils which result to our country from the Roman Catholic system. In the first place, it promotes early marriages, from the anxiety of the Priests to obtain the fees attendant upon the performance of the ceremony, and thus is produced a superabundant population, which from want of employment, is one of the chief causes of the

present misery of our country. In the next place, the Roman Catholic system prevents the children of that communion from receiving a suitable education; which by a systematic exclusion of the Bible from every school where the Priests can exercise their domination, trains up the children in total ignorance of God's holy word. The excuse given for this is, that the object of those schools where the Bible is taught, is to proselyte the children from the Roman Catholic faith: If so, it is they alone are to be blamed who have invented a system of belief which children cannot find in the Word of God. When an education is given by Roman Catholic Priests to the children of their communion, it is such as extinguishes the energies of their minds and makes them prefer their wretchedness at home than to seek abroad for the improvement of their condition. We find therefore they have not the courage to emigrate; for of those who have gone to settle in America or in other lands, it appears that nine-tenths are Protestants. But what is most melancholy, the Roman Catholic system is mainly calculated to keep its professors in poverty. This is a point, my Lord, to which I would beg to call the especial attention of this meeting, and I trust I shall make it plain by the following calculation. We have already noticed that it is said there are seven millions of Roman Catholics in Ireland. We will suppose (which indeed I am sure is not the case) that three millions of these are gentry and shopkeepers, and those not able to work; there then remains four millions of labourers, depending upon the work of their own hands. Now we will include tradesmen of all descriptions in the number, and we may fairly say that on an average these four millions of operatives earn nine pence a-day upon every day they work—nine pence is three-fourths of a shilling; therefore these four millions of people earn three millions of shillings every day they work, and three millions of shillings is 150,000*l.* Now, Dr. Doyle said, in his examination before Parliament, that there were on an average fifteen holydays on which the people *did not* work—consequently the poor labouring Roman Catholics of Ireland are yearly deprived by their religion of the power of earning fifteen times 150,000*l.* or, TWO MILLIONS, TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND POUNDS. If we then add to this, the sums squandered on these days called holydays, in drunkenness and debauchery, which doubtless is very great, we will see the incalculable evils which the Roman Catholic system inflicts upon our country. It may be well to mention here, that in France, which is more enlightened, though Popery there is the religion of the State, only four holydays are kept in the year—All Saints-day, the Ascension, the Assumption, and Christmas. Before concluding, I would take the liberty, my Lord, of asking a question of my hearers:—What is it, my friends which has brought you here to-day—is it a mere idle curiosity, without any further object: or is it that men to whom you look up with respect, have told you the propriety of advancing the cause of the Reformation? Or is it that some who assume to themselves a domination over their fellow men, have said that the project shall not succeed, and who vainly imagine their puny efforts shall prevent the diffusion of the truth of God.

and that in the mere spirit of party, you would come forward to join the cause we have in hand? Or is it that through the mercy of God you have been directed to the reading of his blessed Word; and that you desire that every individual in this land should possess the same privilege which you yourselves enjoy? If, through the reading of the Holy Bible, you have been led to see yourselves lost sinners, deserving the wrath of God to be poured out on you; if you have been brought to know that in the midst of wrath God remembered mercy; and sent his only begotten son to suffer on the cross, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life, I cannot but admire your wish to bring the same grand truths to the knowledge of your fellow sinners and fellow countrymen, that they also may escape the wrath to come, and be made the monuments of redeeming mercy. Still let us expect that we shall meet with opposition; it cannot well be otherwise. We cannot suppose when man attempts to rescue his fellow sinner; to bring him from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God, that the prince of this world will calmly suffer the invasion of his kingdom without putting forth all his energies and exciting all his instruments to prolong his reign of darkness. But though firm and determined opposition shall be excited, it shall not intimidate him who has chosen for his leader the great captain of our salvation, and placed himself beneath the banner of redeeming love. He will march on boldly through the land, in the length of it and the breadth of it, to plant the standard of the cross in those places now ruled over by the enemy of mankind; and in perfect assurance of final victory, he will endeavour to enlist all around him in the same christian warfare, and his language to them will be, "we are journeying to the land of the which the Lord said, I will give it you. Come thou with us, and we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." It is, therefore, my Lord, because I consider this Society adapted to the wants of my country, that I feelly endeavour to advocate its cause. And I would call upon every individual who hears me to come forward in the same glorious and important work, that they may be made the instruments of promoting the honour and glory of God, and the welfare of their fellow men.

The question being about to be put from the Chair, a person in the crowd rose and said, he had some remarks to offer in reply to the attacks which had been made on his religion, which he wished at that time to submit to the Meeting.

Mr. Gordon—If the Gentlemen will wait until the business of the Meeting is gone through, we shall cheerfully hear whatever he may have to offer.

The person then sat down, and the business of the Meeting was resumed.

The Rev. G. Hamilton—I consider, my Lord, that every person is bound explicitly to state some specific ground for his desire to spread the religious principles of the Reformation among the Roman Catholic population of this country. In stating this ground I shall not have recourse to antiquated and controverted opinions, nor shall I draw my observations from learned works inaccessible



to the poor of this country. All I shall say will be taken from an abridgement of the Christian Doctrine, revised, corrected, and edited by Doctor Doyle, and dedicated to the Christian Doctrine Societies in his diocese; and my observations on this book shall be strictly confined to the interpretation of Scripture, or what they call Scripture. In page 11 is this question and answer:—"Q. Why was Christ born between an ox and an ass?—A. To fulfill the words of the prophet, thou shalt be known, O Lord, betwixt two beasts."—quoted from the prophecies of Habakuk, according to the Greek version called the Septuagint, (and stated by a former error uncorrected by Doctor Doyle.) Let us observe here there is a fact stated, of which no trace is to be found in Scripture; and then this fact which had no existence but in some Breviary legend, is said to be supported by a sentence from a Greek version, which neither Churches consider correct. In thus appealing to the Septuagint, Doctor Doyle has contravened the orders of the Council of Trent, which directs that the Latin Vulgate, and nothing but the Vulgate shall be used in any public preachings, lecturings, and expositions. The next count in what we may call the bill of indictment against Doctor Doyle's Christian Doctrine, is to be found in the Chapter on Penance, which is said to be the *fourth* Sacrament. In a preceding chapter baptism is said to be the *first* sacrament—though St. Peter exhorted the Jews, in the 2d chapter of the Acts, saying, "Do penance and be baptized" Douay version.—Here penance is put before baptism: and would any Member of the church of Rome say to a Jewish or Heathen proselyte seeking admission into the Christian Church, "Do penance and be baptized"—that is, avail thyself of the fourth sacrament, and then come back to the first. Yet this is the language which the Douay version would compel them to hold if they attempted to follow the example of St. Peter. The second reason for doing penance is given from Matt. iv. 17.—"Jesus began to preach and to say, do penance for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Now if they had quoted, the strictly parallel passage from St. Mark's gospel, they would have been unable to support the doctrine of penance from our Lord's words: for he said at the same time, and in the same place, according to St. Mark, i. 15—"The time is accomplished, and the kingdom of heaven is at hand. repent and believe the gospel." The same confusion between penance and repentance occurs in other places of Scripture; as, for example, in the passage just referred to, St. Peter is made to desire the Jews "to do penance and be baptized," while, in the next chap. v. 19, he is made to say, "be penitent and be converted." The same confusion occurs in other parts of the Douay Bible, where some editions have penance, others penitence, and others repentance. I may here remark, that the Roman Catholics have no standard edition of the Scriptures—that six authorised editions have been collated, and all six are found to differ. This fact was stated by the Irish Bishops in their correspondence with the Commissioners of Education; and Dr. Murray's attention was called to that statement, but to it he never replied. It stands, therefore, *ex-confesso* that the Roman Catholics have no standard Bible. We shall now

with your Lordship's permission, pass to the so called sacrament of matrimony, which has but one Scriptural proof of its being a sacrament—Eph. 5, 31, 32. I beg leave to remark, that the Latin word *sacramentum* occurs in eleven places in the Latin Bible. In ten of these it is rendered invariably by the word secret, or mystery, whether of God or man—and that in the chapter of Ephesians just quoted, it is translated “Sacrament,” solely for the purpose of making Scripture speak a language consonant to their errors. Thus in Dan. ii. v. 30. “*Sacramentum hoc revelatum est*,” is translated thus—“Secret is revealed;” iv. 6. “*Omne Sacramentum non est impossibile tibi*”—“No secret impossible to thee.” Again, “*Sacramentum regis abscondere*”—“To hide the secret of a King.” Wisdom, ii. 22 “*Nescirent Sacramentum Dei*”—they know not the secret of God.” “*Non abscondam a vobis Sacramentum dei*”—“I will not hide from you the mysteries of God.” 1 Tim. iii. 16. “*Sacramentum Pietatis*,”—the mystery of Godliness.” Rev. xvii. “*Sacramentum mulierum*,”—“The mystery of the woman.” And in Eph. v. 32. “*Sacramentum hoc magnum est*,” the passage is thus rendered—“This is a great Sacrament.” I now come to a charge, to which it is impossible to reply, and which it is equally impossible to justify. In speaking of the honour due to Saints and Angels, the second proof of it is stated to be thus, Rev. xxii. v. 8—“Where John did it,” (though the Angel had once before wished him not to do it in regard of his Apostolic dignity, cap. 19. v. 10) “and I fell down, saith he, to adore before the feet of the Angel who shewed me these things.” Who can deny that this is a proof that John worshipped an Angel? cries Dr. Doyle and his followers. But, my Lord, will it, or can it, be believed, that they have stopped at the end of this verse, and omitted what I shall read of the verse following—“And he (*the Angel*) said to me, see thou do it not, adore God.” Here is ground for asserting the truth of every thing which the Scripture has declared false. Here we could prove that Abraham sacrificed Isaac. Here we could prove that Cornelius worshipped St. Peter; and thus could we prove our Lord commanded Judas to betray him. I have, my Lord, read many books of Roman Catholic controversy. I have found in them many perversions of well-known facts: but this is the first time I ever found the hardihood of making, by a garbled quotation, the Scripture sanction in one verse that which it condemns in the next. Can any one be surprised at my lifting up my voice against so glaring a crime, which, while it dishonours God, leads men to destruction? For two centuries, my Lord, has edition after edition of this self-called christian doctrine been read by the people and sanctioned by Priests; through the means of this the unenlightened peasant has been induced to think, that he was following the example of the beloved Apostle while he is committing an act of idolatry. I think, my Lord, I have made out my case, I have taken a book, published in this town, and convicted Dr. Doyle of sanctioning a mutilation of the word of God, which, unwillingness to offend, forbids me to speak of in the manner it deserves; but, as this tract will be in the hands of most of the Roman Catholics present, I beg them to look

at page 51, and compare the text there with the text that follows in either the Rhemish or our Testament. Having thus stated the grounds on which I support this Society, I think I may defy contradiction of the fact, or blame for the wish which that fact has excited in my mind, that every Roman Catholic should be allowed to act as the Bereans, to search the Scriptures whether these things are so. I will now conclude with my warmest wishes for the spiritual welfare of every Irishman, and I trust my brethren around me will pardon me if I recall to their recollection the language of St. Paul—"that the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves, if, peradventure, God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." The Rev. Mr. Hamilton then concluded, by proposing the following resolution for the adoption of the Meeting:—

"That the Society, now formed, consist of a President, Committee, Treasurer, Secretaries, and such of the public as shall subscribe to its funds.

"That all persons professing a belief in the Holy Trinity, who shall contribute one Pound annually, or a donation of ten Pounds at one time, shall be Members of the Society.

"That a Committee be annually chosen from the list of Subscribers, to transact the general business of the Society; that it meet once at least in every month; and that three Members constitute a quorum.

"That an annual Meeting of the Society be held at such time as the Committee shall determine."

The Rev. Mr. Newcombe rose for the purpose of seconding the resolution, and said—My Lord—The object contemplated by this Society, is neither cloaked nor concealed. Though many may oppose it, yet I trust they will give us credit for sincerity and honesty of intention. I trust, also, that those who are engaged in conducting its operations will be actuated by a spirit of love, and that a manly candour will mark all their deliberations and pursuits. To diffuse the grand principles of the Reformation, is the professed object of the Society—and as the Bible alone is the only rule of faith, it will be the main object of the Society to bring every doctrine to the standard of the Bible, and to let the light of Jehovah's word play upon every dogma or doctrine propounded by every sect or party—in other words, to follow the apostolic rule, "to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." Now, my Lord, it is admitted by all parties, that we, at the present day, possess no authentic written revelation of God's will, save that which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. This being the case, it follows, in the way of inevitable result, that if anything be taught which is incapable of proof from the Bible, the teachers of it, as our Lord speaks, "teach for doctrines the commandments of men." Nothing, my Lord, surely is more self-evident, than that all the decrees of all the Councils in the world, backed by the sanction of all the Popes that ever sat in Peter's Chair, can never make a doctrine scriptural, which is not contained

in Scripture. Indeed, so self evident is this truth, that the church of Rome herself has thought it necessary to act upon it, and has attempted at least to prove her peculiar dogmas by an appeal to Scripture. My Lord, I hold in my hand a book, entitled "an Abridgement of the Christian doctrine, with proofs of Scripture for points controverted;" and, in the preface to the Reader, it is declared, that this Abridgement of the Christian Doctrine is defended and cleared by proofs of Scripture, in points controverted between Catholics and Sectarians. And here methinks, that if Scripture be appealed to for points controverted between Catholics and Sectarians, surely it may be appealed to for points not controverted. Now, as the Scripture only contains points controverted, and points uncontroverted, I claim for my Roman Catholic countrymen a right to examine for themselves the whole of the Scriptures; I claim for them a right to possess the Scriptures. Surely, if they are invited to appeal to Scripture upon points controverted, there can be no good reason shewn why they should be debarred from that portion of Scripture in which Catholics and Sectarians agree—here no danger can properly be apprehended. At all events, I claim for them a right to examine the Scriptures upon points controverted, for that right their Church distinctly admits in this Catechism. Let us now then, my Lord, in a few instances, compare the doctrine propounded in this Catechism, with the Scripture texts brought forward in the way of proof: and I shall leave it to the judgment of this meeting whether I shall not make out a case for the necessity of such a Society as this—a Society not claiming to force itself upon their Roman Catholic brethren, but inviting them to use their judgment and reason—those faculties with which the God of heaven has abundantly blessed them, in exercising a privilege with which their own Church has invested them. The first point, my Lord, to which I shall direct the attention of this Meeting, is, the doctrine of forgiveness of sins, as set forth in this Catechism. The question is asked, "what do you understand by the forgiveness of sins?" The answer is, "I understand that God is both able and willing to forgive us our sins, if we be heartily sorry for them, and confess them, and hath given power to his Church to remit them by baptism and penance." How prove you that?—Out of Matt. c. 9. v. 8. where it is recorded by the Holy Ghost, "that the multitude glorified God, who hath given such power unto man, as to forgive sins, Christ having before proved the said power by a miracle." Now I appeal to the reason of my Roman Catholic countrymen, whether this text proves that the Church has power to forgive sins by baptism, and by penance. No mention is made in the text of baptism or penance at all—and the fact of Christ's having wrought a miracle to prove his power to forgive sins, is brought forward to prove that the Church has power to do so by baptism and penance. May I not ask, referring to this answer, whether baptism and penance were crucified for us? The next subject, my Lord to which I refer, is, that of giving honor to the images of Christ and his Saints. To the question, "what other proof have you for the lawful use of images?" The reply is—"1st. out of St. John, 3. 14. where Christ approves

the making and exalting the brazen serpent by which the Israelites were healed in the desert, and owns it to be an image or figure of himself, exalted on the cross. 2dly. Because we read in Baronius, that famous Church historian, in the year of Christ 31, that Christ himself sent his own image to King Abdagar, and made it also by miracle on the handkerchief of St. Veronica, and on his own shroud. Add to this, that the second Nicene Council, Act, 7, anathematizes image breakers, that is, such as shall break them in contempt or scorn." Now, as to the passage of St. John's Gospel, I must appeal to my Roman Catholic countrymen, whether Christ says one word of approbation of making images of himself; but if we turn to the 18th chapter of 4th book of Kings, in Douay Bible, or to what is called in the Protestant Bible, the 2d book of Kings, we shall find God himself approving the conduct of King Hezekiah in breaking this identical brazen serpent, because the Israelites did burn incense to it; and, in a note appended to this passage in the Douay Bible, it is expressly said, that Hezekiah did it in contempt or scorn. Here then we find the Church of Rome anathematizing him for an act for which God honored him with the express marks of his approbation. The next question to which, my Lord, I shall call your attention, is, "How do you prove it lawful to paint God the Father like an old man, seeing he is a pure spirit, and hath no body? Answer—because he appeared to the Prophet Daniel in the shape of an old man," Daniel. 7. Now if we refer to 1st John, 18th v. we shall find John the Evangelist declaring that "no man hath seen God at any time;" and, by further comparing Daniel, 7, 9 v. with Revelations, 1 c. v. 13 14, we shall see that the glorious person who appeared both to Daniel and St. John, was, not God the Father, but the Son, "God manifest in the flesh." Here then again I charge the Church of Rome with a perversion of Scripture. My next reference, my Lord, is to the subject of the Saints. Q. "how do you prove that the Saints have power to do us good? A. Out of Apocal. 2d c. vv. 26, 27, where Christ hath promised them power over us." "To him," saith he, "that shall overcome and keep my words to the end, to him will I give power over nations, and he shall rule them with an iron rod." My Lord, I am totally at a loss to conceive by what logical deduction this text can prove that the Saints have power to do us good." My learned friend who preceded me, has already remarked upon one of the Scripture texts brought to prove the lawfulness of honouring Saints and Angels; I shall not go over the same ground pursued by him; but there is another text brought to prove the lawfulness of this practice, upon which I feel it necessary to remark. Joshua, chap. 5, verses 14, 15, is adduced for this purpose; but if we carefully examine the whole of the context, we shall find that it could be no other than the Lord Jesus Christ whom Joshua worshipped; for we not only find that he addressed Joshua in the same language in which God addressed Moses when he appeared to him at the bush, but that, in the second verse of the following chapter, he is expressly called "the Lord;" or, in the Hebrew Bible, "Jehovah." Here again we find the Church of Rome perverting the scriptures of Truth, to support

their antiscritptural practice of worshipping Angels, Time, my Lord, will not permit me to remark upon several other doctrines attempted to be supported by the Church of Rome, by an appeal to Scripture. From *doctrines*, therefore, I must pass on to the *morality* of the Church of Rome. The seventh commandment, according to the Church of Rome, says, "Thou shalt not steal." On this subject, it is asked, "When is theft a mortal sin?" Answer, "when the thing stolen is of considerable value, or causeth notable hurt to our neighbour." Here, my Lord, Roman Catholics are taught that they only commit a venial sin, provided the thing stolen be not of considerable value, or causeth not any notable hurt to our neighbour. What, my Lord, shall we think of such morality as this? I shall only contrast it with the simple and beautiful language of Jehovah, "Thou shalt not steal," and leave it to the judgment and reason of my hearers, whether such a gloss is not neutralizing the commandment of God. The last point to which I shall direct the attention of this Meeting, is, on the sin of lying. To the question, "When is a lie a mortal sin?" it is replied, "When it is any great dishonour to God, or notable prejudice to our neighbour: otherwise, if it be merely officious or jesting, it is but a venial sin." No Scripture text is brought to prove this notable interpretation of the eighth commandment, according to the Church of Rome; I, therefore refer my Roman Catholic countrymen to Ephesians, 4. 25.—"Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour:" and to fifth chapter, fourth verse of the same epistle, "Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient." Now, as the Church of Rome appeals to the authority of Scripture on these subjects, it is manifest that she foregoes, at least in these instances, her claim to infallibility. She puts her infallibility to the trial, and she impannels a jury to try her honesty and integrity in her interpretation of Scripture. Too long have our countrymen postponed the trial—too long has the prisoner at the bar of public opinion cried out "not guilty." This Society now arraigns the Church of Rome of the crime of perverting the word of Jehovah. I call upon my countrymen to bring her to trial. I call upon them to try her by the Word of God—I call upon them to act the part of dispassionate, unprejudiced jurymen; and, after having diligently compared the doctrine propounded in this Catechism with the texts quoted to prove it, to bring in their verdict of guilty or not guilty. I am well aware of the intellectual faculties of my countrymen: I cannot for a moment doubt but that every Roman Catholic parent present must be anxious respecting the eternal welfare of his children; I, therefore, again call upon them, both as they value themselves and their children, to try the Church of Rome by the standard of Scripture, and let their unprejudiced judgment and reason be exercised in bringing in a verdict. One word more and I have done. As the Douay Bible is difficult to be procured, not only on account of its great price, but also, from its slight circulation in this country, being, (at least in that part of the country where I reside,) something like a black swan; I wish

to inform my countrymen, that this Catechism gives them the privilege of consulting the Protestant Bible ; for, in the 19th chap. treating on the Cardinal virtues, they will find, that the Protestant Bible is referred to in this Catechism, sanctioning of course, the use of it, in this most important trial.

The Rev. Mr. Newcombe having concluded, Mr. Michael Finn, a Roman Catholic inhabitant of the town, rose to object to the resolution being put ; but upon being remonstrated with, and having been reminded that an opportunity would be afforded him of stating his objections when the business of the Meeting should be disposed of, he sat down.

Mr. Mayers (a converted Jew,) then rose and spoke as follows : —My Lord, I have had the pleasure, during the last three months, of addressing various public meetings in this country. I have been travelling, my Lord, from town to town, and from city to city, calling the attention of the Irish public to the present state of the Jewish people, with a view of promoting the cause of Jewish emancipation—that emancipation which the Son of God came into our world to promote, and which he promised, in person, to the ancient Church of God—“ Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”—free from error, from superstition, and from bondage. I rise, my Lord, with peculiar pleasure on this occasion, to advocate the cause of Catholic Emancipation ; but although it is with peculiar pleasure, that pleasure is not unmixed with a deep feeling of anxiety and responsibility. Considering, my Lord, the object which has brought us here this day, I cannot but be aware that various and conflicting emotions will be excited by the observations which will be made by the various speakers, in addressing this numerous and mixed meeting. I am aware, my Lord, that by some, we shall be charged with a want of prudence—others, probably will charge us with a want of simplicity and disinterestedness ; and when I recollect, my Lord, the jealousy and suspicion, and ill will, with which I regarded those who would have brought me to the enjoyment of that freedom which is now my greatest happiness, I cannot but suppose that the same feeling may be excited in the minds of many who are now listening to me—but I would desire, my Lord, to say, in the language of a Jewish Reformer, and would that the expression might be echoed from tongue to tongue, and from heart to heart, “ Peace—Peace to him that is near, and to him that is afar off. My Lord, I am a young man, but my life, although short, has been an eventful one—surrounded by many difficulties, temptations and trials. I have learned, my Lord, to appreciate the blessings of peace, and, did I not feel persuaded that we were met here to promote the cause of peace, I had not been present here this day. It is to the wicked alone there is no peace, and that the cause of truth is offensive. It was observed, my Lord, by my dear friend who first addressed this assembly, that we were living in extraordinary times. We are living, my Lord, in extraordinary times—the human mind has received a stimulus, unparalleled in the history of mankind—many are running to and fro, and knowledge is increasing ; but it is the glory of our age,

that, whilst the human mind is enlarging, the heart is also becoming enlarged—the real dignity and happiness of man is beginning to be better understood. It is now admitted by thousands, that that dignity and happiness are to be found in promoting the glory of God, and well-being of man. My Lord, I rejoice to think that our own country has been foremost in practically admitting this truth. My Lord, I beg pardon—I believe, by law, I have no country—unless indeed it is a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God—but if adoption, if affection, if deep interest and sympathy, give any claim, then, my Lord, England is my country—Ireland is my country—Protestant England, and Protestant Ireland were the first to hold out the light of truth to fallen Israel—they have been the first to send forth the light of truth to the benighted nations of the earth. My Lord, I have lately been engaged in reading the reports of the different Institutions formed in the United Kingdom for the dissemination of the Gospel of Christ. I read in one of those reports an extract from a resolution of the Bible Society in Paris, returning thanks for the blessings conferred on France by the Bible Society of England. I read an extract from another resolution of a Bible Society in Sweden, returning thanks to England for lighting up the spark of piety and truth. I read also a copy of a letter from India, mentioning the interesting fact, that the Rangoon Monarch, who formerly had persecuted, even to death, the missionaries and agents of christian societies, had of late been so struck with the conduct of one of those Missionaries, as well as with the forbearance and good faith of our army, that he could not but attribute it to the religion which they professed, and that there was reason to hope a permanent impression had been made upon his mind, and that he and his court would become Christians. Oh! my Lord, what mighty dignity does this confer on our native country—on our nobles—on our gentry—on our rich, and our poor—that they can thus unite together—that the rich can give their pound, and the poor their pence, in promoting objects, by which our religion is thus promoted, and God glorified. Happy Protestant England—Happy Protestant Ireland—may they, my Lord, continue their labour of love; and if opposition should arise from any quarter, may they imitate this Missionary, and this portion of our army, and cause our enemies to marvel at our forbearance and good faith—and thus shall the Redeemer's kingdom be enlarged, and our Father's name glorified. My Lord, we read with delight of the glory of British arms, and they have been glorious—we read, with delight, of the renown of our naval exploits, and they are to be admired—we read too of our happy Constitution, the boast of Britons and the envy of surrounding nations. These, my Lord, will pass away, but the exertions of Great Britain to preserve the truth of God shall ascend as a memorial before God, and when the day of visitation shall arrive, she will, I trust, be spared amid the tottering of surrounding nations. In returning, my Lord, to the cause of the Reformation, and the cause of Protestantism, I have to complain of my Reverend and dear friend who seconded the first resolution. He told you that the Reformation took its rise about two



centuries ago. Protestantism, my Lord, has to boast a far higher origin. My Lord, I trust I shall be pardoned if I feel a little vain glory in insisting that the first Protestants were Jews. For several centuries subsequent to the fall of man we read of no Protestants. The wickedness of man and of the Church was allowed to accumulate, until it pleased God to raise up Noah, a preacher of righteousness. He, my Lord protested against the passions and appetites of man—he protested from day to day, and from year to year, until the measure of their iniquities was full, and the Church and the world, my Lord, were blotted out from the book of God; and Noah alone remained the representative of that world, and the representative of the Church. Again, my Lord, *the truth*, as contained in the promise of a Redeemer, was set afloat in the world—another trial was given to man; again idolatries and wickedness accumulated, and another was raised up to protest against it, Abraham, my Lord, was called to leave an idolatrous family and an idolatrous nation, that he might become the father of the faithful, and in him the Church was centered. Again, in process of time, the truth of God was well nigh extinct, and the people of God, had fallen into darkness and bondage—when another deliverer was raised up. But, my Lord, time would fail me to trace the progress of this Reformation from age to age, and country to country;—time would fail me to speak of Joshua and Caleb, who resisted the whole people of God; and the whole visible Church of God, and became the heirs of promise—of good king Josiah, who when the law was found, read it to the people, rending his garments, and thus lamented the wickedness of those who had caused that law to be hid—of *wicked* Jehu, who was instrumental in overturning idolatry and superstition—of Isaiah, who, surrounded probably by the luxuries of a court, protested against the wickedness of the Priests, saying, “Oh, my people, they which call thee blessed, cause thee to err,” Isaiah, 3, 12—of Jeremiah, who protested against the hypocrisy and folly of those who exclaimed “the temple of the Lord—the temple of the Lord are we,” Jerem. 7, 34, whilst they despised the Lord of the Temple. Yes, my Lord, Ezekiel was another of these Reformers—he was told to protest against the abominations of the Church of God, to “cry aloud,” and to declare unto Judah her transgression, and to Israel her sins; and, last of all, my Lord, we read of Malachi, who was sent especially, mark it well my Roman Catholic Brethren—Malachi was sent especially to rebuke the Priests, and to point out to them their hypocrisy, and ignorance of God. It is said, my Lord, that these Prophets came working miracles—this, my Lord, is a mistake, I read of no Prophets performing miracles to establish their mission. They came, my Lord, depending alone on the force of truth and the power of conscience—depending on the spirit of God to enforce their message. But it is time, my Lord, that I should speak of another Reformer—of another Protestant greater than these. The Son of God left the glories of his Father's kingdom, that he might protest against the corruptions of the Church of God.

When asked by Pilate—"Art thou the king of the Jews?" he replied—"For this cause I am come into the world, that I might bear testimony to the truth." He, my Lord, appealed from the then existing Church, to the Scriptures; he appealed to Moses, and the Prophets; he came to give liberty to the captives; he declared that if he made them free, they should be free indeed, free from bondage to man, and "if I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." He sent forth, my Lord, his disciples and his apostles to carry on this Reformation; and so decided was St. Paul in carrying on this Reformation, that he resisted St. Peter to the face, because, being subjected to like infirmities with ourselves, he had unguardedly betrayed it. Thus, my Lord, I have traced the career of Protestantism to the establishment of a new dispensation. For some time, my Lord, the Church of Christ was kept humble and comparatively pure by trials and persecutions. At length continued prosperity brought with it inward corruption, and during several centuries the Church again fell into a state of awful degradation and abomination. And again, my Lord, it pleased Providence to raise up men to protest against them—a Luther—a Calvin—a Cranmer—a Ridley, &c.; men, my Lord, beset, indeed, with human infirmities, but still instrumental in the hand of God in promoting his purposes. Thus, my Lord, has the cause of Protestantism been going on from age to age, and will, through the blessing of God, go on till it shall be consummated by the Redeemer himself, when he shall come a second time, "taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the Gospel"—1 Thess. 1. It is time, my Lord, I should state somewhat more precisely the nature of the Reformation in modern times. It is, my Lord, to declare that the Scriptures of truth are the only guide to truth—that the Redeemer is the only Mediator, and the only Saviour—that the Spirit is the only sanctifier. My Lord, I am persuaded that these truths are the real foundation of individual happiness, of social order, of national prosperity. And let us examine, my Lord, the history of our world, and we shall find that in proportion as these truths are cordially embraced, there we shall find the dignity of man increased; and on the other hand, where ever they are obscured or perverted, there we find moral degradation, and every evil work. My Lord, I have trespassed upon your attention longer than I intended; I fear, also, that I may appear too enthusiastic in the cause I am this day advocating—but, my Lord, I care not to be called an enthusiast when promoting the glory of God and well-being of man. My Lord, I know the value of the Scriptures; during four years their doctrines have enlightened me—their precepts have guided me—their consolations have comforted me—their promises have cheered me. I wish, therefore, my Lord, that others should enjoy them. I have felt too, my Lord, the blessedness of living in peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. I wish, therefore, that others should also enjoy that peace. I trust too, my Lord, that I know somewhat of the blessedness of being renewed from day to day in the inner man—of seeing the passions subdued—and of being able through the influence of the spirit of God, to mortify the flesh with ~~the~~ <sup>its</sup> passions and lusts. I wish that others should be brought

under the influence of that spirit. In conclusion, my Lord, I would address a few words to my Roman Catholic brethren; I would ask you who it is that are seeking your real dignity—we who say, read for yourselves—think for yourselves—pray for yourselves; or they who say, submit to us—think not—read not—pray not? I would say to you, my Roman Catholic brethren, is it true that it is commanded of God that you should read his Word by day—that you should meditate upon it by night? Is it true that David took that Word as a lamp unto his feet, and as a light to his path; and declared that it was pure, converting the soul? Is it true that the Saviour commanded men to search the Scriptures, and declared that they erred not knowing the Scriptures? Is it true that the Apostle Paul exhorted the Colossian Christians, “Let the Word of Christ dwell in them richly in all wisdom—teaching one another, admonishing one another”—and declared that the “Bereans were more noble than those of Thessalonica, because they searched the Scriptures daily?” Is it true that the Apostle James declared—“If any man lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not.” Are these things true, my christian friends?—What an awful delusion must they be under who say to you, read not the Scriptures, put out that lamp, and quench that light—if you need wisdom, ask not of God, but of your Priest. Oh! my christian parents, take that word, it will teach you to love your children, and to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord—give it to your children, it will counteract the opening depravity of their nature. Yes, my Lord, let us diffuse those Scriptures; it will teach the poor to be content with such things as they have, seeing the Saviour had not where to lay his head—that having the Gospel they are rich. It will teach the rich that without that Gospel they are poor indeed—it will teach them too the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though he was rich, yet for their sakes he became poor, that they through his bounty might be rich. It will teach the afflicted—and who, my Lord, among us, whether rich or poor, have not some cause of sorrow—to familiarize our minds with a state where we shall hunger no more, and where we shall thirst no more—where God himself shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, and where hate shall be true unity—neither bond nor free—neither Jew nor Greek—neither male nor female, but where Christ shall be all and in all. Mr. Mayers then concluded by proposing the following resolution for the adoption of the Meeting:—

“That the following gentlemen, with power to encrease their number, and appoint a Treasurer and Secretaries, be requested to act as the Committee for the ensuing year:—Hon. and Rev. Dean Bernard, Reverend Messrs. Vernon, Roberts, Wyone, J. Wynne, Jameson, G. Stopford, Waugh, Downing, Vigors, J. Doyne, J. Chapman, and Fishbourne.”

The Rev. Mr. Waugh—My Lord, I rise to second the resolution which has been moved by the Gentleman who has just sat down. I do this, my Lord, because its object is great and good: it is great in as much as it aims at purging our country from error and false religion—it is good in as much as it means to enlighten the darkened

minds of men by the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, and the principles of the Reformation. But, my Lord, the history of nations and of the Church shew, that man has seldom undertaken any great enterprize successfully, single-handed. In all ages men have found it necessary to associate for the purpose of mutual counsel and mutual effort, in order to accomplish their end. My Lord, I do not contemplate a reformation merely from the errors of the Church of Rome : I look at the state of a great portion of our population, and I hear a reformation loudly called for. For, my Lord, I am obliged to admit, that profane swearing, drunkenness, and Sabbath breaking, abound in this country, and from *these things* even many Protestants want to be reformed. I long to see a reformation such as the learned Gentleman who went before me has described. I am sure there is not an enlightened mind present, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, that will not join with me in praying that such a Reformation may soon take place in Ireland.

The following Resolution was then moved by Capt. Vernon, and seconded by the Rev. Mr. Wynne :—

“ That the unanimous thanks of the Meeting are due to the Earl of Aldborough, for his kindness in taken the Chair, and his obliging attention to the business of the day.”

Mr. Gordon rose and said, that although the Meeting had then as far as the Reformation Society were concerned, adjourned, yet, that some Roman Catholics having expressed a wish to be heard, he trusted his Lordship would consent to continue to fill the Chair.

Mr. Finn also concurred in the entreaty, and the Noble Lord continued to preside.

Mr. Mic. Finn, who was at the further end of the Chapel, then commenced an address, but was called upon to ascend the platform. This he, at first, declined to do, saying that he considered his lungs sufficiently strong to be heard from where he then stood, but, on repeated calls of “ to the platform,” he consented to remove, and said—My Lord, before I address myself to the topics which have been introduced here to-day, I must advert to the novel nature of the circumstances under which this meeting has assembled. Heretofore when Bible meetings were held in this town, meetings, by the way, whatever might have been said to the contrary, which had for their object views similar to those which this Society more openly professes, those meetings were held in the Presbyterian Meeting House. Now how does it happen that the first meeting of the Reformation Society is held in a Methodist Meeting House—and I should like also to know why it is that the gentry of the county have not lent, by their presence, the sanction of their names to the objects which these gentlemen have in view. I congratulate this county upon both the circumstances: the first I look upon as favourable to the peace of the country, and the second affords cause for still greater gratulation. The Presbyterian Meeting House was announced as the place where this meeting was to have been held.—*(Cries of no, no.)* Well, it was applied for at all events, and refused by an English gentleman named Cox, a resident in this town, who though a friend to the Bible is not a friend to Societies like

this, whose objects are not alone not good, but are calculated to disturb the peace of the country. His refusal to grant the use of the Meeting House entitles him to the gratitude of every Roman Catholic in the community. The next subject to which I advert is the absence from the Meeting of all the distinguished individuals resident in the county, whose presence, were they here to-day, could not but add weight to the proceedings of the Meeting. Where, let me ask, is our last Chairman (Colonel Rochfort)—why has he absented himself? I take his absence as a proof that he condemns the objects of this Society. His absence to-day will furnish an additional motive for me, as well as for every Roman Catholic in the county to respect him the more. Colonel Bruen, who has so often proved himself our friend in Parliament, is also absent. Is it therefore unreasonable to suppose that he too disapproves of this Meeting? Colonel Rochfort approved of the Bible Society, and sanctioned their proceedings by his presence. Colonel Bruen did the same; but they both, indeed in unison with every respectable person in the county, disapprove of this Meeting, and therefore they are absent.—(*Loud cries of, they are at the Quarter Sessions.*) I will, under these circumstances, turn round to the deputation who attend here from the parent Society, and ask them, should they not pause before they proceed further in their mad career? Is it possible that they who are strangers can be as well acquainted with the wants or wishes of this county as the resident Gentry, not one of whom are to be found amongst them? I would ask them for what purpose do they prosecute so fruitless a proceeding? For no reason under heaven but to give them an opportunity to pour out the vilest lava that ever issued from the mouth of a man against the religion of the people. My Lord, I will defend my religious creed against the calumnies of any man, be who he may. Mr. Abraham, or Mr. Isaacs, or whatever his name is, the converted Jew, has been pleased to talk of our emancipation. I will tell him that that emancipation forms the undivided subject of our thoughts when we rise and when we lie down—the whole bent of our thoughts, whether amid the bustle of the day or the stillness of night, is directed to the attainment of that darling object; all our ideas are concentrated to one cardinal point, the recovery of our lost liberties.—We look upon you as our foes—you hate ourselves and our country—

Mr. Gordon rose to order, and requested that the Gentleman would refrain from any political allusions.

Lord Aldborough said that questions of a political nature could not be brought into the discussion.

Mr. Finn—I do say that ye hate ourselves, and that our country will be the scene of civil strife if you proceed to put your wild theories into practice. I say that when ye admit that your object is to establish the principles of the Reformation my position is proved. I will tell the Gentlemen, however, that they are beginning at the wrong end. They do not show us that they have our interest at heart. Let them first procure for us the removal of our civil disabilities, and then they will come with a better grace, and perhaps with better chance of success, to convert us. I ask is it not requisite

that they should give us some substantial proof that they have our real interest at heart? Let them at the foot of the throne, in a body, demand that our rights—rights which have been unjustly withheld from us—be restored, and then—(*cries of order, order, —chair, chair,—politics.*)

Lord Aldborough again interfered—after which,

Mr. Finn proceeded.—I shall yield to the suggestions of the Chair, and not pursue that topic further. Well, my Lord, it comes to this—that they are willing to do us eternal good, but will not afford us any temporal assistance. I intend asking those Gentlemen to whom they directed their advice—was it to their Roman Catholic Countrymen they addressed themselves? If so, I as one, wish to know what creed I am to adopt. If I ask one Gentleman (Mr. Newcombe) a Protestant Divine, who by the way I charge with acting unfairly in the manner he read the passages from the Catechism—he has one answer for me. If I ask Mr. Waugh what creed I am to enter into, he has another answer for me, and so on. Now, if they are not agreed among themselves as to which is the true Christian Church, I think they come with a bad grace to ask me to change my creed, and leave me at sea with respect to the one I am to chose in its stead. I have stated that Mr. Newcombe did not fairly quote the Catechism. With respect to the commandment, “thou shalt not steal,” he certainly read one question and answer, and finding that, to his perception, answer his purpose, he stopped short; but if he had acted fairly, he should not have omitted any question or answer bearing on the point. Now, my Lord, he brings that answer as a charge against the morality of the Church of Rome, and he led you and a portion of the meeting to suppose that the answer was, that stealing was only a crime when “the thing stolen was of considerable value, or caused notable hurt to our neighbour.” Mr. Newcombe remarked what a contrast that explanation made with the simple and beautiful language of Jehovah—“Thou shalt not steal.” Now, my Lord, in this same Catechism Mr. Newcombe would have found, and immediately following the passage which he read, that unless the person committing the theft made restitution, the sin could not be forgiven. I ask could that “simple and beautiful” command be explained more fully, more satisfactorily, or in more strict accordance with morality? Now, my Lord, the explanation which is given of the Seventh Commandment, in the Catechism used by children and revised by Dr. Doyle, is, I think, most satisfactory. The child is asked, “what is forbidden by the Seventh Commandment?” And the answer is, “all unjust taking, all cheating in buying or selling, &c.” and it goes on to state that he who accepts or takes what he knows to be stolen is as guilty as the thief. The Rev. Mr. Newcombe did endeavour to make us believe, so as we did not steal to a great amount we were not guilty of a sin of any consequence? but I trust I have shown the meeting, that such a system of morality is not that which the Catholic Church recommends. The nature of the morality which has been sanctioned by Doctor Doyle, is far different indeed from that attributed to him by Mr. Newcombe. Now, my Lord, let me

ask who are those people who come here to instruct us? How do they show that the Reformation has anything to do with Christ? How do they shew the regular link connecting them with our Saviour? One of the gentlemen who spoke, traces the Reformation to a period of about two hundred years back, while another said that Noah was a Protestant—I wonder he omitted Adam, who I dare say was just as good a Protestant as Noah. He was at all events the father of Protestants. I will ask any one of them to show me a connexion between the Reformation and Christ? I will ask any one of them to show me the number of Bishops that existed even seven years ago in any of the Reformed Churches? I shall wait a quarter of an hour for a reply.——

Mr. Mayers here rose to give an answer, but Mr. Finn requested that he may not be interrupted, and called for the protection of the Chair.

Mr. Mayers said he got up, as he thought, in compliance with the wish of the speaker, but not at all for the purpose of interrupting him.

Mr. Finn then proceeded—I defy any of the Reformers to show a regular succession of Bishops. I will not wait to have a similar question propounded to me, with respect to the Bishops of my church, but I will show you at once the regular succession, in which they claim from Christ himself. I will take the “Tree of Life, or the Church of Christ.”—(Here Mr. Finn unfurled a large piece of painted canvass, like a map.)—I will read you its nature, and I hope the meeting will indulge me with patience. What does this profess to do? (said Mr. Finn, pointing triumphantly to his painted Tree.) It gives a history of the Church from its earliest ages—it commences with St. Peter—it gives you the number of Popes, the number of Councils, the number of learned men, and the ages they appeared in, the number of heresies which crept in since the first century down to the present time, and there are fifteen or sixteen hundred of them at least. All these heretics, it may be remarked, were Reformers—they professed, as the Reformers of the present time do, to take their religion from the Bible—they have vanished, and the Catholic Church has remained unchanged and unchangeable. To the foot of this Tree is appended, by way of explanation, several passages of Scripture, which, with your permission, I shall read for you. They are illustrative of the text, if I may so call the facts which are here emblazoned—they prove the whole truth, nay more, the sole truth of the Catholic Church, and place her where she ought to be, the mother of Christianity. Mr. Finn then proceeded to read several passages from the margin or off-shoots of his “Tree”—but—

The Rev. Geo. Hamilton interrupted him, and said that he set out by saying that he was about to read to them texts from Scripture, whereas scarcely a syllable he had read was contained in the sacred Volume.

Mr. Finn—I defy these Gentlemen to produce any Tree such as I have exhibited to you, proving their connexion even with Luther. Now I have shewn the distinct connexion which exists between

our Church and Christ. Have they upon the opposite side shewn any connexion whatever between their Church—or rather the Reformation, for distinct Church or Creed they appear to have none—and our Saviour? I have, I think, shewn this Meeting that the effects which must flow from the establishing a Society such as is contemplated, must be of the most pernicious nature—pernicious alike to the morals, as to the peace of the country. What greater proof need be given of its anticipated effects, than the simple fact of the absence of such men as Colonel Bruan and Colonel Rochfort? They know the country well, and if they supposed that even in the most remote degree, this Society could be beneficial to the country, would they not, upon the present occasion, have been assisting at its deliberations, aiding it by their counsel, and giving weight, by their presence, to the proceedings? These men, who have come amongst us are strangers alike to us and our wants. When the poor man is hungry, where will they be found to feed him—when he is oppressed by misfortune they will not be here to give him consolation—when the poor man is afflicted with disease, they will be far distant, and will not supply the means for his relief. It is true, they may leave him, at their departure, a Bible, but surely, deprived of friends and relatives, and oppressed by disease and want, that of itself would afford him but little comfort. But the truth is, my Lord, we want not their interference, we seek not for their aid. Would not Dr. Doyle, think you, attend the shivering wretch who, stretched upon his pallet of straw, would derive more consolation from a visit from his Priest than from a host of Bible readers, and distributors of Bibles into the bargain? Would not, I ask, the visit of Dr. Doyle, or of such as he, under the circumstances I have stated, infusing, as he would, into the mind of the poor man, feelings of morality and religion, prove more efficacious, than the obtrusive visits of an itinerant deputation paid by a Society for—(*Cries of no, no*)—Well, paid or not paid, it matters little. I view them with suspicion—I deprecate this meeting—I abhor the principles which, if it succeed, it must establish, of setting man against man. We want no Reformation Societies here. We abhor your principles. We only want your assistance to enable us to obtain our Civil Rights. In points of a religious nature we must be permitted to choose for ourselves. The Protestants of this great County give no encouragement to this meeting. They are aware the interests of society and the peace of the country cannot be advanced by a Society such as this; and being mischievous in its tendency they wisely and properly stand aloof from any participation in its proceedings. Mr. Mayers, the converted Jew, has passed a high eulogium upon England. That she is a powerful country I admit; and her exertions to give liberty to Greece entitle her to the thanks of every independant man. But it is not to Greece alone that her exertions in the cause of liberty have been confined. She has attempted to free Portugal from the gripe of French power. All I beseech of her is, that she stop not in the pursuit she has commenced, but that she extend her exertions in the cause of liberty to this country; and if she prove herself as great in Ireland as she has



been in Greece and Portugal, then will a Reformation be brought about, more lasting in its effects, more durable in the benefits which it will confer, than this or any other itinerant deputation can possibly accomplish.

The Rev. Mr. Newcombe rose to reply—but Mr. Finn stated, that in vindication of his religion he thought it necessary to read a prayer, to shew what were the feelings towards Protestants instilled into the minds of the Roman Catholics. They were taught to pray for them as well as for the people of their own communion. [Mr. Finn then proceeded to read a long prayer, but it contained no allusion whatever to any particular class of christians. It concluded by an invocation to the throne of mercy in favour of "all those for whom I ought to pray."]

The Rev. Mr. Newcombe then came forward and said—My Lord, I shall preface the observations which I feel it my duty to make, in reply to the charge which the Gentleman has brought against me, by thanking him most heartily for coming forward. I give him full credit for the motives by which he is actuated. He has a right as a Roman Catholic to defend his principles, and I thank him cordially for coming forward to do so. He said the Society commenced its labours under very novel circumstances. So did our blessed Lord commence his labours under very novel circumstances—so did St. Paul. The enquiry made when St. Paul commenced his labours was, "what will this babbler say?" I never heard of a Society that did not commence under "novel circumstances." The Gentleman has brought forward as a charge against this Society, that it holds its first meeting in a Methodist Meeting-house, whereas he asserts, that the Bible Society have always met in the Presbyterian Meeting house. Now, my Lord, it does not strike me that this is a matter of such great importance; in fact I do not think it a circumstance that ought to have occasioned so much joy to the learned Gentleman, for if he had been at all acquainted with the proceedings of the Hibernian Bible Society, he would have known that that Society began its labours under what the Gentleman perhaps would call very novel circumstances, just twenty-two years ago, by holding its first meeting in a place of worship then deemed by many a Dissenting Meeting-house. There were then I believe but twenty-one persons present, and yet if I mistake not, the Gentleman himself has seen, since that period, meetings of the Bible Society in this town, which were attended by the resident Gentry of this county, the absence of some of whom on this day has also afforded the Gentleman such hearty gratification. But surely, my Lord, if Colonels Bruen and Rochfort are absent, their absence does not prove that they are unfriendly to the objects of this Society. The Presbyterian Minister of Carlow may not see the use of the Society, and therefore he had a right to refuse the use of his Meeting-house. We do not force ourselves on any one; and if hereafter he sees that this Society will prove useful to the country, as sure I am he will, then I make no doubt but that he will give us his help. The Gentleman has called his creed the ancient creed. Is it, I would ask him, more ancient than the Bible? I distinctly stated the objects of this Society to be to disseminate the Scriptures. Now if the Word of God be the true

test by which to try Christianity, and that his creed is proved by that test to be unscriptural, its antiquity will prove but a bad substitute for its want of truth. I shall pass over the political portion of his speech, for with politics I have nothing to do. He asks us what is our creed? and I reply to him the Bible is our rule of faith and practice. The Gentleman brought it as an accusation against us, that we did not kneel at the foot of the throne in his behalf. He alluded, I suppose, to the throne of George the Fourth; but there is a throne before which, morning and evening, I as well as the friends who surround me, do supplicate for my Roman Catholic countrymen—the throne of divine mercy. The Gentleman asked whether it was to my Catholic countrymen I addressed myself, and he then called upon me to show what Reformed Church I wished them to join. I have no hesitation in saying that this Society does address our Roman Catholic countrymen; and I think a case has been this day made out, proving the necessity of such address; but we do not call upon them to join any particular professing body of Christians. The Learned Gentleman and I are at issue, I make no doubt of it, on the meaning of the word "Church." My views of the Church of Christ led me to acknowledge no person to be a member of his mystical body, who is not "washed and sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." Where any individual is thus brought into union with Christ, through the instrumentality of reading the Word of God or preaching, I have no wish to interfere with his right of choosing to which particular body of professing Christians he may wish to unite himself. It is a question with which this Society has nothing to do. We leave it between him and his God. Certain I am he will not join the Roman Catholic Church. The Gentleman next brought forward a very serious charge against me—namely, that I had unfairly quoted passages from the catechism in reference to 7th commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." I leave it to the Gentleman himself to say whether it is not a fair deduction to draw from the passage, that a Roman Catholic will not think himself guilty of a mortal sin unless the thing stolen is of considerable value, or causeth notable hurt to our neighbour. Thus what would be mortal sin in one case would become *venial* in another, and vice versa. It is true, as the Gentleman charges, that I did not read the answer relative to restitution; but what, I would ask, has that to do with the sin being either mortal or venial? That answer merely points out what is to be done when the sin is committed. The Gentleman then called upon us to prove, that the Established Churches are connected by succession with Christ. He must be aware, that until the reign of Henry the Second the Roman Catholic Church did not exist in Ireland. All I have to show in answer to the question put by the Gentleman, is the connexion between the Established Church now, and that which existed in this country previous to the reign of Henry the Second. I can, without any doubt, connect the Ministers of the Established Church with the Ministers antecedent to the time of Henry, and having done this, I think the Gentleman's question is answered. It is true a Foreign Latin Bishop,

namely the Pope, did, at the time of the Reformation, send over Bishops to this country, but I maintain they are not Irish Bishops, though they attempted to usurp that character. Dr. Doyle is the successor to them, but not to those Bishops who existed antecedent to the time of Henry, and who never bore the yoke of papal supremacy; nor to those who threw off that yoke and asserted the liberty of the Irish Church at the time of the Reformation. The Gentleman, to prove the truth of his Church, referred to what he called a "Tree." I, for my part, would have preferred referring to the Bible, the Word of God, rather than to a human composition called "A Tree." He then referred us to the Councils. Does he know to what a size the proceedings of those Councils run? Why, my Lord, I have access to the Councils, embracing no less than 36 ponderous folios: there is at least a cart load of books in which these proceedings are recorded, and does the Gentleman expect that I am to wade through them, or am I to have recourse to the "Tree" for truth? I refer him to the Bible for the truth, and I would beseech the learned Gentleman to examine and study it both for his own and his children's sake; and my reason for doing so is, that I love him and desire to do him good. I would beseech and entreat of my Roman Catholic friends as rational creatures, not to deliver up their faculties to any man. Let them compare the catechism, and the texts of Scripture which are given in it with the Word of God itself, and they will then see themselves at which side the truth lies.

The Meeting then adjourned to the following day.

## SECOND DAY.

The Meeting this day was numerous and respectably attended even more so than on the preceding day. A great many of the leading Gentry of the County were present, and amongst them Colonel Bruen, one of the Members. The tickets, as had been agreed upon the preceding evening, had been fairly distributed between Roman Catholics and Protestants, and the Meeting was therefore composed of nearly equal portions of both Communions.

At eleven o'clock the Earl of Aldborough took the Chair. His Lordship said he hoped that every thing would be conducted with the same order and propriety as had marked the proceedings heretofore, and having told the Roman Catholic portion of the Meeting that they had not a more sincere friend than himself, his Lordship called on Mr. Meyers to proceed.

Mr. Meyers—My Lord, I present myself to the attention of this Meeting for the purpose of replying to the challenge thrown out by the Gentleman who spoke in opposition to the proceedings of yesterday. He asked me to declare to which of the numerous sects of reformers I belonged, and also challenged me to prove my claim to be considered a member of the Church of Christ. Before I enter

upon the proceedings of this day, I beg leave to reply to one or two questions which were put to me by a Learned Gentleman whom I have great pleasure in meeting on this platform. I have been asked, my Lord, whether I were not a protégé of the Rev. Louis Way, and whether I were not with him at Nice five or six years ago. I beg leave to say I never saw that Gentleman, and that I never was at Nice. I am not ashamed, however, of being called a converted Jew, for to be a truly converted Jew, I consider to be possessed of the highest dignity and the highest happiness that can be conferred on man. Nor am I ashamed of being called by the name of Abraham—he was “the father of the faithful, and the friend of God”—and however formerly my feelings may have been wounded at hearing the name of Moses sneeringly applied to those of my nation, I have since learned highly to appreciate that name. For Moses was a man of true dignity of character—not because he was bred at Court and learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, but because being so, “he cared not to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter”—esteeming the reproach of Christ greater treasures than the riches of Egypt—and choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.” If asked, however, under what circumstances I came to this country, and under what circumstances I have attended the various meetings to which I have alluded, I beg to answer that I come here “free from all men,” and that “I have made myself the servant of all” wherever and whenever I have had an opportunity of promoting the glory of God and the well being of man. I return, my Lord, to the question proposed to me yesterday, and beg to answer that I am a member of that portion of the visible Church which is known as the Church of England, and that I trust also that I am a member of the invisible Church of Christ. This distinction between the invisible and visible Church is no novelty. It is founded in the very constitution of human nature. The more we examine the Scriptures, the more we shall see this distinction insisted on. It pervades the writings of the Prophets of the Old Testament as well as of the Apostles of the New; and one great object of our Lord’s Ministerial work was to establish this distinction—one however which it has been the endeavour of the Prince of darkness, the enemy of man, to destroy or obscure. This distinction, was enforced by the Prophet Jeremiah, when he was sent to expostulate with the Jewish People, and to say to them—“trust ye not to lying words, saying—the Temple of the Lord—the Temple of the Lord—the Temple of the Lord are these.”—Jer: 7. 4. It was the great curse of the Jewish Church that they boasted of being the Temple of the Lord, whilst they forsook the Lord of the Temple, of being the children of Abraham, without having the faith of Abraham. It has been the great fault of the Christian Church, that whilst exclaiming the Church of God, the Church of God, they forsook the God of the Church. Again, this distinction was enforced by the Saviour of mankind, when he exhorted the members of the Jewish Church—“Say not within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father.” And when he declared to the members of the Christian Church, “Not every one that saith

upto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." Again, this distinction was enforced by the Apostle Paul when he declared that "they are not all Israel who are of Israel"—that "he is not a Jew who is one outwardly—neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter; whose praise is not of man but of God." This distinction is enforced by the same Apostle in reference to the Christian Church, when he says that "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." If I am asked, who are the members of this invisible Church of Christ?—I answer, that they are those of whom the Apostle Paul says, "that they are discerned of no man;" and of whom it is said by our blessed Lord—"they are not of the world even as I am not of the world." Again, my Lord, if I am asked, what is the peculiar character of the members of this invisible Church?—I answer, that they are united to Christ by faith; that "they are partakers of his Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world, through lust;" and that they "walk in the spirit," and are "led by the spirit." These are they which compose that invisible Church, of which it is said "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This, I conceive, is clearly insisted on by our Lord in his well known discourse with his Disciples, and to which I beg the particular attention of my Roman Catholic brethren. In Matthew 16, 13, we read there that "When Jesus came into the coast of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his Disciples, saying, whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am, and they said, some say thou art Elias, others John the Baptist, others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Mark, my Lord, and mark it my Roman Catholic brethren, it was upon this confession that our Lord declared him blessed. "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona:" and why was he declared blessed? Because this acknowledgment proved him to be adopted into the family of God, and to have been born again.—"Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto you, but my father which is in Heaven." This, my Lord, is the rock on which the Church is built, viz—a spiritual perception of, and consequent union with, the Divinity of Christ, which the Father can only confer, and which when conferred, the power of darkness cannot destroy. I cannot offer a better comment on this subject than that of the Apostle Paul, who says that "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but the Holy Ghost," or that of the Evangelist who says, that "As many as received him (Christ) gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name, who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." If I am asked what is the evidence of an individual being a member of the Church of Christ? I answer in the words of the Apostle John—"He that believeth has the witness in himself." And again in the words of our Lord, "By their fruits ye shall know them." I am aware that to many this language will

seem mysterious—that many will be inclined to say, as was said by the Jews of old to the Prophet Ezekiel—“Does he not speak parables.” But, my Lord, it was in reference to this subject that the Apostle Paul declared that—“the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they were foolishness unto him ;” that therefore whilst he spoke wisdom to them that were perfect, it was not the wisdom of this world. Having thus shown what is meant by the Church of Christ, and who they are that are members of that Church, I shall now proceed to explain what I mean by the visible Church. By the visible Church I mean the whole body of professing and nominal Christians. If it be asked what advantage is it to be a member of this visible Church, I again refer to the answer of the Apostle Paul to a similar question. Towards the close of his 2d chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, he insists upon the distinction between the visible and invisible Church, and at the commencement of the 3d chapter he proposes the question, “What advantage then hath the Jew,” or in other words, what advantage is it to be a member of the visible Church ? And mark the answer—“Much every way, but chiefly because unto them were committed the ORACLES OF GOD,” Yes, my Lord, it is an advantage to be born of Christian parents, and to be brought within the pale of the visible Church, since it brings us into contact with the oracles of God—with the means of grace—it ensures a scriptural education and the advantage of Christian Pastors, whose office the Apostle Paul declares to be “for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” Having thus shown, my Lord, the distinction between the visible and the spiritual Church of Christ, I beg your attention for a few minutes, while I endeavour to prove that the Church of Rome has no claim to be considered either as the spiritual Church of Christ, or as forming part of the visible Church. Here I must beg the indulgence of my Roman Catholic friends. I entreat them to listen to me in the same spirit of affection and kindness with which I hope I am addressing them. That the Church of Rome is not the spiritual invisible Church of Christ will be readily admitted. And I submit, my Lord, that she cannot be considered as a part of the visible Church, the office of whose pastors and teachers is to edify the body of Christ—since she is antichristian in her principles—antichristian in her doctrines—and antichristian in her practice. I say, my Lord, she is antichristian in her principles. The great principle of the Christian character is to “to walk by faith and not by sight”—and the duty of the Christian Ministry is to build up the Christian in this principle. This is constantly insisted on by the Apostles in all their Epistles, but more especially by the Apostle Paul in the 4th and 5th c. of 2d Cor. and in the 8th c. of Rom. and still more strikingly by the Apostle John, 1 John c. 5th and 10th “If we receive the witness of man the witness of God is greater—because this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son—he that believeth on the Son of God has the witness in himself.” Now, my Lord, it is notorious that the principle of the Church of Rome is the very opposite to that which we have defined. She calls upon her

members to walk by sight and not by faith—she insists therefore on a visible head, a visible cross, a visible sacrifice, and visible images—and she insists, too, on the testimony of men, in direct opposition to the witness of God, which he has testified of his Son, that “he that believeth on the Son of God has the witness in himself.” Another great principle of the Christian character is, that the Word of God is a lamp to his feet and a light to his path. The principle of the Church of Rome is to extinguish this lamp, and to quench this light. The Church of Rome is therefore antichristian in its principles. The fundamental doctrines of Christianity, my Lord, I conceive to be—that Jesus Christ is the *only* Redeemer and the *only* Mediator—and that the Spirit of God is the *only* Sanctifier. And I, (said the Saviour) when I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. “There is one Mediator (says the apostle Paul) between God and man—the Man Christ Jesus.” The doctrines of the Church of Rome lead her constantly to place something between the Saviour and the sinner—the Priest, penance, indulgences, mass, &c. Again, the doctrines of the Church of Rome lead her habitually to overlook the work of the Spirit of God in enlightening the understanding and purifying the affections, and to rest in the *opus operatum*. The Church of Rome is therefore, my Lord, antichristian in her doctrines, and need I add, that she is antichristian in her practice. Need I contrast her proceedings with the declaration of the Apostle, “That the end of the commandment is love—out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.” I could take you, my Roman Catholic friends, from city to city, and from country to country, and show you how they have streamed with Jewish blood, and with Christian blood, I could tell you of her indulgences, of her trafficking with the souls of men, of her profanation, of her blasphemies, of her obscenities, of her abominations. Pardon me, dear friends; I say not these things to wound you—but I speak of those things which I have heard and seen. Can this be the Church of God—of which it is said, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” I speak as unto reasonable men; judge ye what I say” take the Scriptures of truth, and pray to God for his Holy Spirit. He has said “Ask and ye shall receive—seek and ye shall find.” And do you wish to know how you are to understand the Scriptures? The Apostle Peter tells you, “Laying aside all malice and guile, and hypocrisy, and evil speaking, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby.” Before I conclude, I beg to say a few words in answer to an objection that is generally brought. It is triumphantly asked by our Roman Catholic friends, how is an illiterate person or a child to perform an act of faith? This question has been re-echoed and reiterated by the Priesthood and defenders of the Romish Church. I know not exactly what is meant by an *Act of Faith*—but if it be asked how is faith to be exercised independent of human authority, I ask how is sight exercised? Sight, my Lord, it will be said, is to see; so faith is to believe, and the one may be as independent of human authority as the other. So far, indeed, from the testimony or authority of man being necessary to establish this faith, that St. John actually contrasts that which

is built on the testimony of men with that which is built on the testimony of God—declaring, that if the witness of men be received, the witness of God is greater. And what is this witness of God? The same Apostle tells us, “He that believeth hath this witness within himself.” This, my Lord, is sometimes called enthusiasm, but I insist that it is consistent with the analogy of things. When the blind man who was cured by our Lord was called before the Pharisees to give an account of himself, all he could answer was—“Whereas I was blind, now I see.”—So the Christian, who has been brought to see himself as a sinner, and the adaptation of the Gospel to his wants and necessities as a fallen creature, and no other is entitled to the name of Christian, whatever be his profession; such a one needs not human testimony, but has the witness within himself. Again, the Scriptures say—“Desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.” It may be asked, how can we grow by it? I would also ask, how do we digest our food, and how do we grow thereby? and this is a question which has puzzled physiologists in every age; and if we know not the how and the why with respect to earthly things, shall we cavil because we know not in respect to heavenly things? The more we examine the Scriptures of Truth, the more we shall find them adapted to the wants of human nature, and the capacity of the human mind. Yea, my Lord, I do not hesitate to say, that whilst they contain stepping-stones to the highest intellect, they are adapted to the meanest capacity. Take them then, my dear christian friends, and may they lead your feet into the way of peace—may they deliver you from that bondage and darkness in which we are all, by nature—they are capable of making you acquainted with yourselves, and acquainted with God—they can enlighten your mind and purify your heart—draw forth the affections of the one, and give a new stimulus to the capacities of the other. An habitual communion with God, through the Scriptures, will raise the tone of your minds; whilst they point out the moral diseases of the heart and the head, they supply the remedy, and thus, whilst they will humble you to the dust, they will exalt you to the highest heaven.

Counsellor Finn.—my Lord, it was not my intention to have attended this Meeting at all, and when at a late hour yesterday I did enter the room, I assure you it was not for the purpose of addressing the Assembly. The turn, however, which the discussion took, induced me to alter my determination; and I beg most explicitly to state, that when I presented myself to your Lordship's notice, nothing was farther from my intention than to wound the feelings of any person. With regard to the question which I asked this morning of the eloquent Gentleman who has just sat down, I am sure he will do me the justice to admit, that the enquiry was made courteously; and I beg to assure him, that nothing was further from my intention than to hurt his feelings, or be guilty of rudeness towards him. If I have done either, I regret it, and I hope that this will satisfy him.—(Cheers.) My Lord, in the observations which I am about to offer, I beg to disclaim altogether any wish on my part to wound the feelings of my Protestant fellow countrymen; I respect them too highly to interfere even with their prejudices. It



is not my wish to touch a chord that shall vibrate discordantly; but if anything fall from me of a dubious character, I hope the Meeting will attribute it more to the nature of the discussion in which we are engaged, than to a premeditated wish on my part to urge anything of an offensive nature.—(*Cheers.*) I can assure you, my Lord, I think we are all born for nobler ends than wasting our time in discussions of this nature—the only result of which must be to produce discord in the land. Notwithstanding all that we heard of the miseries which afflict the country, notwithstanding the vices which have been attributed to her sons, still weighing all things fairly, I glory in the name of Irishman. The character of my country has been illustrated by her sons in every part of the world. In the conqueror of Napoleon we find an Irishman. In the Congress of America, Irishmen are the most distinguished orators. If we look at South America we will see her liberty sustained by Irishmen. Look to Greece, where the name of General Church will for ever be revered. There is in fact no quarter of the globe in which Irishmen have not distinguished themselves in the cause of liberty and man. I glory in my country, and he must be a recreant who does not.—(*Cheers.*) My Lord, the Gentlemen who have addressed this Meeting have shewn little regard for my feelings or those of my Roman Catholic countrymen. I was born a Roman Catholic in the very town where I have now the honour to address you. To the religion in which I was born I am fondly attached, and being better acquainted with it than the Gentleman who preceded me can possibly be, I hope I may be excused if I see it in a different light from what he does. He tells us that it is mere show and outward display. Shall I inform him to what religion Fenelon belonged? Was the religion of which he was such an ornament composed merely of show and outward display? The very character of the individual repels the accusation made by the Gentleman against his religion. I am not, my Lord, acquainted with controversy. I do not wish to be so. Nay, more, I shrink from it—I abhor it—because I think it has added another to the already numerous catalogue of causes which have reduced this devoted land to its present state of degradation and misery. This controversy has changed and soured the character of the Protestant landlord. It has made him in every sense of the word uncharitable, and has dis severed the link which bound him to his tenantry. I can tell you it is not balm but gall that you extract from the Scriptures. The public good ought to take precedence of the dissemination of the Scriptures; and if the public good were attended to by the Gentry of the country, Ireland would not exhibit the disgraceful spectacle that she does. The talents of her sons, the fertility of her fields, the commodiousness of her harbours, ought to place her at this moment amongst the first of the nations of the earth. But alas! what a contrast does Ireland present between what she ought to be and what she is. We want not theology, but we want charity—without charity all else is as the tinkling of a cymbal. Now it is because I don't think that this Society has for its object the promotion of charity that I oppose it. My Roman Catholic countrymen are accused of bigotry, but are their Protestant

neighbours less so? I will tell you a story of a friend of mine, Dr. Duffy, who dining one day at the Duke of Devonshire's, was questioned by a gentleman present, upon the doctrine of exclusive salvation. The gentleman said, I understand that the Roman Catholics believe that all Protestants must be damned—but of course this idea must be exclusively confined to the lower orders, the higher and well educated portion of them can't believe such a doctrine. I beg your pardon, replied Dr. Duffy, they all believe it, high and low alike—you take all the good things of this world and we are determined to take all the good things in the next. What interest I will ask do the leaders of this Society take in our temporal affairs. If I find every one of the fifteen Lords whose names are set down as Patrons of this Society, without a single exception, voting against Catholic Emancipation?—(*Cries of politics, politics.*)—I do not wish to hurt the feelings of any person, or to advert to topics which are irrelevant, but I think I am well warranted in supposing, that when I find men hostile in a temporal sense that they cannot be friendly in any other. The man who refuses a loaf to a starving peasant because it costs a penny, and gives the Bible which costs nothing, can't be supposed at all events to be a friend to the person who is famishing. The Bible may be good but you spoil it by the manner in which you give it—

“Timeo danatos & dona ferentes.”

I see all the supporters of this Society are linked against the poor Catholic. They exclude him from all places of trust and emolument, and then they give him the Bible to teach him to bear up against the indignities which they heap upon him. They say to him—“Turk, Jew, or Atheist is welcome here, but not a Papist.” Here, in the regulations of the Society, they say all are welcome, whether they be Thumpers, Seekers, or Jumpers. So it is with the Constitution, of which these Lords are such supporters—all are welcome except the poor Papist. The advocates of this Society say that the Scriptures are adapted to the meanest understanding. St. Paul says, that there are passages which may be tortured by the unwary to their own destruction.

Mr. Mayers—I rather think the Gentleman means St. Peter.

Mr. Finn, addressing Mr. Mayers—Well, perhaps so. Do you recollect the passage, for really I do not—I am *not* skilled in Ecclesiastical Law!!

Mr. Mayers having repeated the passage, Mr. Finn resumed. Well! that will do very well. But the advocates of this Society say that the Bible is adapted to the meanest capacity. If this were so, what use have we of Bishop or Parsons? If I can understand the Bible as well as a Bishop or Parson, why then, I'll be my own Parson. I'll pay no tithes—and then we shall have a portion of the tithes, as in the good old Popish times, devoted to the use of the starving poor. The Gentleman has said that the catholic church is of a persecuting character, and wherever it has power, there is freedom curtailed. If he tells me of the atrocities which marked the reign of Mary, I will reply to him that she is and will continue to be execrated for the persecuting spirit of her reign—and Mary

was a Roman Catholic. But on the other hand, if he feels disposed to laud the memory of the good Queen Bess, I will refer him to the acts of her Parliament, and show him that she too was a persecutor. But the truth is, persecution is not confined to any particular nation or religion; and as well may the Gentlemen say that we are persecutors because Mary was so, as we stigmatize him as a persecutor because the good Queen Bess passed a statute which enacted that any Catholic Priest found instructing children should be cut up in pieces. This mild and Christian-like law was enacted in the time of the good Queen Bess, the great founder of Protestantism. Atrocities like those I have described, all parties must condemn. These are not the doctrines which good feeling and charity would inculcate. These, however, are the atrocities which took place, to use the words of the immortal Grattan, "when Theologians were tearing up charity by the roots, and were pelting each other with the fragments." I call upon every person here to abstain from these pursuits. The efforts of any man or set of men must prove useless to improve the state of society, while the people continue to be politically degraded—while they are stigmatized and branded as aliens in their native land, and where even their religion cannot find fair play. Gracious God! who talks of the persecuting spirit of Popery being exclusively confined to members of that creed when the Penal Code, a Code written in blood, is considered? We may be told that the Catholics do so and so, and that they consider exclusive salvation to be confined to their sect; but what do our opponents do? Why, my Lord, there is not a Member of the House of Lords or Commons who does not swear that our religion is idolatrous and damnable, or, in other words, that we are to be all damned. I do not believe that there is a single Roman Catholic in this room, or in the whole county, would swear that any Protestant would be damned, Lord Aldborough—Mr. Finn, we do not swear that any man will be damned.

Mr. Finn—My Lord, where is the difference between swearing that a man will be damned, and that he holds damnable doctrines, the which if he do hold, he most certainly will be damned? Now, my Lord, see how this damnable religion has been encreasing in an adjoining County—I mean the County of Kilkenny. All the exertions which have been used to propagate the Reformed religion in that County have altogether failed; for in the year 1731, I find the population of the County rated thus—Protestants, 7,500—Catholics, 42,000. In the year 1826, after a lapse of 95 years, how do the relative numbers stand? Why, my Lord, the Protestants are 8,750, while the Catholics in the same period increased from 42,000 to 180,000. This is a comical way of spreading the Reformation. Catholicity is spreading every hour, not only in the County Kilkenny alone, but throughout the Country generally. I hope, in any thing I have said, that the feelings of my Protestant auditors were not outraged. I cannot be unmindful of the courtesy with which they heard me, and I trust and believe that those who follow me on the other side will be treated in a similar way by the Roman Catholics present. The Gentleman has talked of the degradation in

which France is sunk ; but I have been in France as well as he has and I declare I never saw a happier, a more contented peasantry in my life—no, not even in England. Now let us compare England with barbarous Ireland, and I think that in the number and atrocities of crime perpetrated in the two Countries previously to the last Assizes, the balance of crime will be found greatly to preponderate in favour of England. But due allowance is not made for the political degradation which the majority of the people suffer, nor is the Catholic allowed fair play—his energies are cramped, his faculties are not allowed to expand, and the effects which such causes must naturally have produced, are placed to the score of his religion; whereas the political degradation in which the Catholic is sunk, is the fruitful source from whence all the miseries of this country flow. If we mutually forget when we met the religious distinctions which divide us, and if the Catholics were allowed to worship their Creator according to the dictates of their own consciences, unshackled by political disabilities, matters would go on very differently in this country. That there are many Roman Catholics who are knaves; I must admit; but there are also Protestant knaves. It is not so much to the difference of religion that we owe the miseries of this country; it is, I repeat, to the political restrictions which are imposed upon the people; and until these restrictions are removed, we will continue, and we must continue as we are, discontented, disunited, and unhappy.

Mr. Gordon—My Lord, I wish the duty of replying to the speech which you have just heard had devolved upon some of the friends who accompany me, any of whom are much more competent to the task than I am; but as they are for the most part Clergymen, and as the Gentleman who has preceded me is a layman, they deem it more prudent to remain back, and allow the statements put forth by a layman to be answered by a layman. I am conscious that this arrangement will deprive the meeting of a great gratification, which they otherwise would enjoy, in hearing any of my Reverend Friends in place of me; but, however, I shall, with your kind indulgences my Lord, proceed to rebut the assertions made by the learned Gentleman who has just sat down. I cannot but admire the profession, with which he set out, and which, considering the topics he discussed, he adhered to better than I could have expected; yet I must be permitted to say, that the strain in which he indulged, was not in every instance that of conciliation. I can, however, make allowance for sentiments which are strongly felt and warmly expressed. The learned Gentleman referred us to the celebrated Fenelon, as an example of what the Roman Catholic Religion was capable of achieving; but he forgot to tell us that Fenelon was excommunicated—he forgot to tell us that the expression of the very sentiments which the learned Gentleman so highly extolled, procured for Fenelon the anathema of the Church of Rome. The Gentleman dwelt with feelings of regret upon the altered appearance of the gentry towards the lower classes, and he attributed this change to the influence which popular discussion had upon them—that it lowered their characters and prevented them from indulging

in the kindlier feelings of their nature. Now I would appeal to the candour of all who hear me, and particularly I would appeal to the candour of the poorer sort, for they are the best judges of the fact, whether the persons who are most anxious to propagate the Scriptures, are not invariably foremost in the ranks of those who strive to alleviate the miseries under which the people labour—whether they are not the most munificent in their charities, and whether they are not distinguished above all others for the temporal comfort of their tenantry? The poor man can best answer that question, because not a day passes over his head that he does not receive some benefit, that he is not indebted for some act of kindness to those gentry who are anxious to propagate the Scriptures, and whom the learned Gentleman described as having their characters lowered and the kindlier feelings of their nature blunted. The Gentleman dwelt with great force upon the fact, that out of the fifteen Peers whose names grace the list of patrons of this Society, there is not one who is favourable to the cause of Roman Catholic Emancipation. I will not follow the example set me by the learned Gentleman and so far transgress the rules of this Society as to dwell upon a political topic; but what influence should their opinions upon the question of Roman Catholic Emancipation have upon the subject now under discussion, the formation of a Reformation Society? The Gentleman says he must, so long as they are unfriendly to the question of Emancipation being carried, receive every thing coming from them with distrust. Is it rational, is it fair, to stigmatize a set of men simply because conscientiously adhering to their principles, they are not found in the ranks of the supporters of Catholic Emancipation? The Gentleman has said that when the Irish peasantry asked for bread they got a stone. I am most willing to try the fact by that test; and in reply I would beg leave to refer him to the list of charitable individuals, who when famine was stalking through the land, desolating whole provinces, came forward and munificently subscribed a sum of four hundred thousand pounds for the relief of the suffering poor; I would ask him, at that period did the peasantry receive a stone when they asked for bread? No, he well knows they did not. I could point with triumph to the list of benefactors on that occasion, and show him that the most laborious members of the Committee for the relief of the poor, that those who subscribed the largest sums, and themselves employed the greatest number of the poor, were individuals whose names are connected with the Religious Societies of the country; and yet because those Noblemen and Gentlemen did not vote for Catholic Emancipation, they are to be held up to public odium, and stigmatized as persons whose characters have been soured, and who are incapable of ministering to the wants of their fellow-creatures. The Gentleman says, that because many passages in the Scriptures are hard to be understood, therefore, the people ought to be kept from perusing them. We have a direct command from St. Peter to read the Scriptures, and not one word of prohibition is contained from one end of them to the other. But the Gentleman thinks that if the Scriptures were freely disseminated, the people then would be able

to do without Parsons, and we should consequently get rid of titles, &c. Probably he is not aware that where the Scriptures are most read, there Parsons are in the greatest demand. How will the Gentleman account for this strange anomaly—and what is more, where the Scriptures most circulate, there will be also find most written commentary upon them. So far, therefore, from the circulation of the Scriptures doing away with the necessity of Parsons, it is where they are most read that there is the greatest demand for clerical instruction and clerical superintendence. The learned Gentleman has informed the Meeting that the Reformation Society must fail in attaining its object, because that in the County Kilkenny, since the year 1731, a period of ninety-five years, the current of proselytism has been setting strong against Protestantism; and during that period the Roman Catholic population has nearly quadrupled, while that of the Protestant has remained stationary, or if it increased at all, not in equal proportion to the Roman Catholic population. I would first remark that this increase may be accounted for in various ways besides that which the Gentleman has chosen; but I will suppose that the increase has taken place partly at the expense of Protestantism? What, however, does that prove? If the Reformation Society had been in active operation in the County Kilkenny for the ninety-five years alluded to, I shrewdly suspect that there would not at this moment be a single Roman Catholic upon its surface. Viewing the subject in the manner which the learned Gentleman does, it argues strongly the necessity which exists for forming a Reformation Society to counteract the mischief, and I hope the County of Kilkenny will have it soon. The learned Gentleman has remarked that the Roman Catholics are Christians, and that it is unfair to charge upon their religion the crimes which he asserts are traceable to political causes. I do not mean to say that the Roman Catholic Clergy positively encourage crime in their flocks, but I must express my belief that they negatively sanction the commission of it by withholding from the people all knowledge of that Word, the perusal of which would produce in their minds an abhorrence of crime, and would lessen its amount, if not entirely banish it from the land. The charge I have made against the Roman Catholic Clergy is, I am aware, one of a very heinous character, and requires to be supported by unimpeachable testimony. I mean to support my proposition by authority of some weight, indeed by authority which all here must admit to be conclusive upon the subject. I hold in my hand a pamphlet written a short time since by Dr. Doyle, who was, I believe, at the time it was published, Parish Priest of Wicklow, and subsequently of Bray. Mr. Doyle, in speaking of the general state of morals in the County Wicklow—a County by the way which is less stained by atrocities than almost any other—remarks, “How few, comparatively speaking, will you find able to give a tolerable account ‘of the faith that is in them,’ or who properly understand those moral and religious duties which saving faith obliges them to fulfil? Very few indeed. And if you will examine into their conduct you perceive at once the fatal consequences of ignorance in flagrant habits of cursing, swearing, blas-

phemy, detraction, lewdness, drunkenness, rioting, theft, the most scandalous violation of the Sabbath, together with numerous instances of more outrageous crimes." Again, "To reflect that so great a portion of time is not only not usefully, but most perniciously employed, is extremely distressing. The less disorderly are in the habit of loitering during these hours in their cabins, or in the hedges, when the season permits; but the greater number assemble in one or other of the meanest and least reputable houses in their neighbourhood, where the evening is generally spent in playing cards, in indecent diversions, lewd songs, obscene conversations, and the like irregularities. But if a wake or a dance, the favourite scene of amusement, be within reach, the youth of both sexes flock thither from a considerable distance, where the greater part of the night is spent in such sports and amusements as are shocking to common decency, utterly destructive of morality and religion, and are better suited to a company of bacchanals than an assembly of Christians." One more passage. Speaking of the manner in which the Sabbath is observed, he says. "The Sabbath also affords ample opportunities for reading and reflection; yet that sacred day is impatiently expected through the week, not for the purposes intended by its divine institutor, of repairing by rest, and religious exercises, the injuries which labour, solicitude, temptation, and infirmity, may have done to soul and body. No. It is desired by the greatest number, on account of the opportunities it in particular brings of indulging in idleness, in drunkenness, in rioting, in turbulent sports, such as football, handball, hurling, &c., in dancing, in gossiping, yes, and in ribaldry, seduction, and intrigue, which to the great scandal of our religion, the reproach of our people, and the shame of our country, are the pursuits by which the day of God is peculiarly distinguished."—Now, my Lord, I have drawn a picture of society for you, a parallel to which I do believe is not to be found in any christian country; but, my Lord, you are not indebted to me for the colouring. The truth of the facts I have stated do not rest upon Protestant authority; we are indebted for the intelligence to a Roman Catholic Clergyman. In this state of society, in this moral chaos, exhibiting such a conflict of vice in a state of active fermentation, the learned Divine who has placed in array before us this disgusting exhibition of enormity, has not failed to attribute it to a cause.—Now for the cause. Dr. Doyle says—"I believe that ninety-nine in every hundred Irish Catholics, who would freely shed their blood for their faith, are living in the habits of such vice, as St. Paul assures us exclude one from the Kingdom of God; and yet those very persons expect salvation with as much confidence as St. Paul himself, who was unconscious of transgression." We had before, my Lord, a general display of vice—now we have a grouping of character—a black classification of crime—ninety-nine in every hundred living in such a state of sin as he describes, expect salvation with as much confidence as St. Paul. What a picture of society does this Roman Catholic Priest place before us. "Whence this great inconsistency," he continues, and well may he ask the question, "Whence this great

inconsistency, but that being ignorant of the duties which the Christian law prescribes, they offend without scruple, and fondly rely on abstract faith and sacraments, as if these alone were sufficient to save a wilful sinner."—Here, my Lord, a Roman Catholic Clergyman of high authority says, that although the peasantry are living in a state of the greatest vice, they are still as sure of salvation as St. Paul, and to what cause does he attribute this strange order of things? Why, my Lord, to a reliance on abstract faith and sacraments. He tells us that this frightful state of society is not traceable to political causes, and he surely is as competent a judge as either of the Roman Catholic Gentlemen who spoke at this meeting. He does not attribute this state of things to the dissemination of the Bible, nor yet to the state of the law. No my Lord, he tells in candour, in honesty, and manliness, that it is not to any of these causes the ills which afflict the land are attributable, but that on the privileges and immunities granted by the Roman Catholic Church, the superstitions of Ireland rest, and consequently the Roman Catholic Religion is the primary cause of all. I address myself to my Roman Catholic auditors with earnestness and sincerity, when I tell them that they are resting their eternal salvation upon a foundation of sand. They may be as the Hindoo or the Hottentot, ignorant of the Word of Life; but the Roman Catholic Church would have them believe, that resting upon a nominal profession of faith will ensure their salvation. In mercy, my friends, to your own souls, I call upon you to ask yourselves can this be true? It is high time for you to inquire whether the faith you hold be or be not the faith of the Gospel. I charge the Roman Catholic Clergy with wilfully keeping the people in darkness, with withholding from them not only scriptural knowledge, but education of any description, and as this is a very important position which I have laid down, I feel I should be a calumniator of the Roman Catholic Clergy, if I did not establish the truth of my position in the clearest manner to every unprejudiced mind. The additional facts to which I mean, my Lord, to draw your attention, shall be derived solely from Roman Catholic authority. I have shewn you the picture of society by one of the Roman Catholic Pastors, and I shall proceed to explain the anomaly which presented itself to his eyes, of the people relying upon abstract faith and sacraments for their salvation. Education had been until within a few years, totally neglected in Ireland, and it was not until a stir was made by the religious societies, that the Roman Catholic Clergy even thought of the necessity of teaching the people. I would refer to the state of education in this country about twenty or thirty years ago. Why, my Lord, at that period not one in ten persons could read; and in the elder classes of the present time the proportion still holds. I will prove to you that the Clergy not only neglected the duty of instructing the people originally, but that when the Protestants undertook to supply the lack of service, the Priests not only did not co-operate with them, but did everything in their power to keep the children in as great a state of ignorance as they had kept their parents. To shew that it was their wish to keep the light of education from the people, I can prove



the fact that in many instances where schools were set up by Protestants, the Priests were satisfied first with watching the progress of these schools, and when they found that the peasantry sent their children to be instructed, then, and not till then, were Roman Catholic Schools opened. I will not dwell upon the system of education which was pursued at these schools, nor shall I advert to the means that were used for abstracting the children from the Protestant schools. It will be sufficient for me to state, and I can prove it if necessary, in order to establish my charge against the Priests, of wishing to keep the people in ignorance, that the moment they succeeded in causing the children to be withdrawn from the schools, which were under the superintendence of Protestants, that moment the Roman Catholic schools were abandoned. I am not asserting these facts upon my own knowledge—I am not resting the support of my case upon my own assertion. I rest my proofs upon the testimony, nay, more, upon the oaths of Roman Catholic Clergymen themselves. The Commissioners of Education Inquiry, previously to their entering upon their labours, addressed a circular to every Clergyman, Protestant as well as Roman Catholic, in the kingdom, requiring to be furnished with a return of the number of schools in each parish, with the number of children receiving education at them. The returns were received, and the truth of them in every instance vouched upon oath. We therefore have an exact account of the number of schools under Roman Catholic Patrons and the number under Protestant. It appears in the second Report of the Commissioners that there were altogether in the various districts of Ireland, 11,823 schools—and at these schools there were 568,964 children receiving education.—It would be an interesting question to discover what proportion of these children were educated in schools under the Roman Catholic Priesthood. Five-sixths of the population are Roman Catholics, and therefore it would not be unreasonable to suppose that five-sixths of the aggregate number of children were receiving education at their hands. How does the fact turn out, however?—Why, at the time the return was made, the number of schools under the superintendence of the Roman Catholic Priests, amounted to 352—while the number of children receiving Education at them amounted to only 33,529 of an aggregate of 568,964. This calculation, my Lord, is not mine, it is taken from documents vouched by the oaths of Roman Catholic Clergymen themselves. But the proportion which the Priests claim here is even more than they are entitled to, because it is a well ascertained fact that previously to the Commissioners entering upon their tour of inspection, a simultaneous exertion was made by the Priests to detach the children from the Protestant Schools, in order to make an exhibition of their strength, and by proving to the Commissioners the influence which they possessed, induce them to believe that such a system of education as they pleased, and none other should be adopted. Three hundred and fifty-two schools, which is all the Priests even claim, would give one school to every seven parishes in Ireland, and this they call educating the people! Have I failed, my Lord, to prove the position with which I started—have I failed

to prove that the Roman Catholic Clergy have attempted to close up the principal channel of Education in this Country—have I failed to show that they are hostile to any description of Education, whether Scriptural or otherwise? I think I have not. I have convicted them upon their own testimony—testimony given on oath, and I leave the result to the Roman Catholics themselves. I have, before I close my proof, another fact to state. It is another description of evidence, but resting like the former on Roman Catholic testimony. This fact suggests a most important question, namely, what course the Roman Catholic Clergy of Ireland pursued with respect to the Sacred Scriptures—what means they adopted to circulate the revelations of God? I would first assert that they neglected, shamefully neglected this duty; that they allowed the people, whose souls had been committed to their care, and of which they will one day have to render an account, to remain in total ignorance of the fact, that such a book as the Scriptures was in existence. Is this a charge that cannot be proved? I wish from my heart that it were. In the Kildare-place Society for promoting education, a very respectable Gentleman of the name of Donnellan is employed as an inspector. He was examined by the Commissioners respecting the fact, whether or no the people were acquainted with the Scriptures. I shall read an extract from the testimony given by that Gentleman upon oath. I am not using my own authority, or Protestant authority. I wish to establish my charge against the Roman Catholic Clergy upon Roman Catholic testimony, and Mr. Donnellan, my Lord, is a Roman Catholic. He is asked—“Do you find throughout the country a prevailing ignorance of both versions of the Scriptures?—Yes, the most lamentable ignorance in our Kildare-place Schools. Do the children know that the Testament is the Word of God?—No, they could not tell that, even when I put the answer into their mouths—and if the children of our schools are so ignorant with such advantages, I conclude their parents must be more so. Do you think the peasants could, in most instances, distinguish between a Testament and any other book of the same size upon a religious subject, put into their hands? Upon my word I think they could scarcely do it, except where the exertions of the Bible Society have succeeded. But in many parts of Connaught the peasant does not know what a Bible or Testament is.” I quote from testimony delivered on oath to support the fact, that except where the Bible Societies have succeeded, the peasantry do not know that the Bible is the Word of God. But such is the worse than Cimmerian darkness in which the extensive province of Connaught is sunk, that the peasantry there do not know what a Bible or Testament is. I would put it to the Roman Catholics, whether they can for the future continue an organized opposition to the Bible Societies, when it has been proved to them, by a member of their own creed, that to such Institutions the people are indebted for the knowledge of what a Bible or a Testament is. I think I have now clearly established an awful charge against the Roman Catholic clergy, the charge of keeping from the people God’s best gift to man. Have equal pains, I would ask, been taken to prevent the peasantry from be-

coming acquainted with books of a very different description, whose very touch is pollution—books which it is impossible to read without leaving a taint of depravity on the mind? I will prove by a mass of testimony, from which there can be no appeal, that while the Book of God was hunted from the Schools, every thing that could deprave the mind or injure the morals of the children was suffered to have free course. I will read for the meeting a specimen of the books found in the schools: where these books were read, had the Bible entered, it would have been pursued by the Priest as an intolerable nuisance that could not be suffered to remain in the school. The following is a list of the books, and who ever heard of their being denounced from the altar, as the Bible has been?—"Seven wise Masters and Mistresses of Rome,"—"Irish Rogues and Rapparees,"—"History of Freney,"—"Redmond O'Hanlan the Robber,"—"Captain Grant, a gentleman Highwayman,"—"The Garden of Love,"—"The Feast of Love,"—"Moll Flanders,"—"Fanny Meadows,"—"Devil and Doctor Faustus,"—"Pastorini's Prophecies," &c. &c.—These are but a few specimens (said Mr. Gordon) of what were found in the schools. The catalogue contains upwards of 200 of a similar description, and will be found in the First Report of the Commissioners of Education Inquiry. Now, while there has been a culpable neglect on the part of the Roman Catholic Clergy on the one hand, of imparting the blessings of education to the poor themselves, there has been an active opposition exhibited by them towards those who were anxious to diffuse a system of moral and religious education throughout the land; and this opposition has not been confined to scriptural education itself; but, in their phrenzy, the word of God has been assailed. Nay, we have heard the impious wretch who buried that Divine Word with a pair of tongs, publicly lauded by a man who professes to be a Christian Minister! Have I not, I would ask, my Lord, fully established the proposition laid down by Dr. Doyle, in the pamphlet from which I read the extracts, that the state of ignorance and degradation in which this country is sunk, is traceable solely to effects produced by the Romish Religion? Have I not shown that the total, the lamentable want of knowledge which has been proved to exist, is solely attributable to the Roman Catholic Clergy? and having, as I conceive, incontestibly proved these points, I shall conclude in the words of an inspired writer—"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

When Capt. Gordon sat down, a person of the name of Conlan, who had created some disturbance at a recent Meeting of the Bible Society which was held in Tullow, presented himself on the platform.

Mr. Newcombe said, that before the person could be allowed to address the Meeting, it would be necessary to put a few questions to him—*Great uproar.*

The Rev. Mr. Frith, then stood forward, and spoke as follows:—My Lord, at the close of the Meeting yesterday, the person who now stands near me attempted to address your Lordship; I then interrupted him as I do now, not with the intention of claiming

precedence for myself, for I felt I could add nothing to the effect of the convincing statements made by my friends, whom you have already heard, but for the purpose of showing that it would be degrading to this respectable Meeting, to allow this person to take any part in the discussion. The adjournment, however, being carried last night, I was then unable to expose him as I had intended. I will not now occupy the Meeting by addressing it at any length; my only object is to put this person to the test, by showing who he is, and in what character he lately came to the County Wicklow; you will then be enabled to judge how far it will be creditable to the Roman Catholics who have come here this day, to commit their cause to such an advocate, and to you, my Lord, and this respectable Meeting, to occupy your time in listening to such a person.—Stand forward, Sir, and answer the questions that I shall put to you. Did you ever see me before?—Yes. In what character did you make your appearance in the County Wicklow; was it not as a Roman Catholic Priest who had renounced the errors of his Church?—No. Did you challenge the Priests to meet you in public controversy?—Yes. Who prevented you from going forward to the discussion at Coolfancy?—You did, Sir, from vanity, because you wished to go yourself. Did you write any letters to me on that occasion?—No, Sir. Is this your hand writing?—No. You have not examined the writing?—I know my own hand writing. [Three letters were then read, of which the following are copies :—]

(No. I.)

“ To the Rev. H. Moore, *Carnew Castle, Carnew.*

9, Upper Sackville street,  
July, 22d, 1825.

Dear Sir,—I heard to day from a Gentleman named Carleton, that a person, calling himself Conlan, and professing to be a Reformed Roman Catholic Priest, is in your neighbourhood, and has been received by you and the Rev. Mr. Frith, as being in truth what he professes to be. From Mr. C's. description of him, and of the story he tells, I have little doubt of his being the same person who, in the month of April last, attended the Bible Society Meeting, and made himself known as a Roman Catholic Priest of Maynooth, of the name of Conlan, and for several days imposed on many persons here, telling the most extraordinary tales, and making a high profession of Religion, and finally went off, saying he was going to England. Upon enquiry, however, all the statements he made relative to Maynooth, and some other matters, were ascertained to be false, and there was no doubt left on the minds of most who had known him, but that he was an *Impostor*, and had some sinister design, although it was not apparent what that was. I thought it would be but kind in me to give you this information, in case it were the same person, that you might not be imposed on, &c. &c.”

(See note 1.)

E. W.

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NOTE 1.—Before the Letter No. I. was received, Conlan had preached several Sermons in Carnew and the neighbourhood, and had, in every place, given challenges to the Roman Catholic Priests, &c., at length his challenge

(No. II.)

" To Mr. Frith.

August 16th, 1825.

My dear Sir,—I seize upon the present opportunity of writing a few lines to you; thanks be to the Lord, I am spared to this. After leaving you I was sorely tempted by *Satan, my Father*—yea to put an end to my existence. My heart bleeds—I am quite humbled—I could ask the pardon of all I have deceived. I shall, till I go down into the grave, love you as the instrument in the hand of God to take me before I could flee. I came to Mr. P's. despairing of mercy; but he, on last Sunday, brought home Jesus to me—a leper greater than Naaman. My haughty nature is humbled, and I could think it a worthy service to unloose the latchet of his shoes. I am unworthy to rest under such a roof. The more you hear of me, the more you hear of my lies. I am determined to use this tongue in the service of Jesus that I used in the service of *Satan*, not speaking of parties, but of the Gospel. Let Mr. P. know how his ministry was blessed to me. A line from you would be a gift.

I remain yours, &c. &c., A. Conlan.

\* \* \* \* \* Coolfancy nearly broke my mind down—I am happy I was not in it—I might bring an odium on the cause I would lose my life to defend \* \* \* \* \*

(See note 2.)

(No. III.)

" To the Rev. Mr. Frith, Carnew.

Ballymore, Sept. 8th, 1826.

My Dear Sir,—I take the liberty of writing to you—as one of the few Christians—when the press teems with odium on my head, and I am the sport of a cruel public; and did I think they made my peace with an offended God, I should be happy to suffer more. I am not guilty of any sinister motive, but seek the good of my benighted countrymen. The position I took was an infamous one, under the banner of lies; for bitter and sweet could not flow from the same fountain; you had no need of my lies to advance his cause. May it be the prayer of all, that my repentance may be in proportion to my guilt. I never changed my name, nor called myself M'Sweeny, as the Carlow Paper said. I am guilty of being a

at Coolfancy was taken up by some School-masters, and a day appointed for discussion. On the receipt of the letter, Mr. Frith read it for him, and charged him with having made several statements that proved to be untrue. Conlan, after some hesitation, gave quite a different history of himself—acknowledged that all he told the Gentlemen at Carnew was false, and professed to be very penitent. It was, however, only by the most determined threats of exposing his character, that he was deterred from attending the Meeting at Coolfancy, which occurred the day after his being detected. Mr. Moore and Mr. Frith attended the Meeting on the day appointed, and stated that they would defend their own cause, and not leave it to depend on a stranger, who might betray it into the hands of their opponents. The Schoolmasters, however, refused to discuss the subject with any person except Conlan.

*liar*.—Vile as I have been in the sight of the Roman Catholics they have offered to get me into Stony Hurst. I suffered hunger and want; I had to leave the neighbourhood; a friend, a poor Protestant, took pity of me here, and invited me to stay with him, where no one knows who I am, and there I labour in the field with him. May the Lord grant me some situation, where I will be out of the reach of temptation. Can it be possible any Gentleman could charitably give me an old Logic and Dwigths Theology? I will bless and pray for Mr. Wynne as an instrument of calling me before I went further. I am writing a tract entitled *an admonition to liars*, interspersed with a brief account of *my own life* &c. &c.

(See note 3.)

A. Conlan."

I shall now, my Lord, only make one more observation respecting the writer of the two last of these letters.—Is a person of his character fit to address an assembly such as this? or can any Christian sect be benefitted by the advocacy of one who acknowledges himself to be an hypocrite and a liar?—Before I sit down, I cannot avoid expressing my amazement at the line which Mr. Finn took, in the commencement of his speech yesterday evening. In what company did he come to this house, when he felt himself warranted to impugn the respectability of those here assembled. If Dr. Doyle, instead of this little Gentleman, had been there at his back, he could not have assumed a more triumphant air, when he congratulated himself and his Roman Catholic brethren on the absence of the principal men of this County. This Meeting required not the presence of any man, however high or influential, to add to its respectability. Do Mr. Fisbbourne, and Mr. Hamilton, and the other Gentlemen by whom it has been supported, require an introduction in the Town of Carlow? If then I must give an answer to the Gentleman when he enquires where is Colonel Rochfort? Where is Colonel Bruen? My answer will be that of an Irishman. I will answer him by asking where is Dr. Doyle? And if peradventure he sleepeth, or is on a journey, who have come forward as his representatives in defence of the Citadel of Rome? When that Church is assailed in the manner she has been this day—will not one of her own liege subjects rise up in her defence—must she be left to depend on stipendiary troops for her protection? Will Dr. Doyle, when his doctrines are impugned, when he is accused, nay convicted, of perverting and suppressing passages of Scripture—will he allow his defence to rest in hands so polluted as are those of this Conlan? Where then I ask again is Dr. Doyle? Where is Kinsella? and why is that man of Tullow (Clowry) absent? He who so solemnly promised, at the Bible Discussion in this town, "to be always found prepared to defend the doctrines of his Church?" he too is absent, and now deserting those whom he before deluded? With respect to Mr. Finn, personally, I must say, that I have no wish to confound his character

NOTE 2.—The Letter No. 11 was written from the house of a Clergyman in the County Wexford, some time after Conlan's having been detected.

NOTE 3.—The Rev. Mr. Wynne was one of the first in the neighbourhood of Carnew who suspected his character.

with that of the person in whose company he was found at this Meeting. No, I know that he and his family are respectable, and I admire the manliness and candour with which he came forward to defend his religious sentiments; and have only to lament that such zeal and ability were not exerted in defence of a better cause. How lamentable that a Gentleman of his rank in life, and that has in other respects got such a liberal education, should have all the faculties of his soul concerned on the attainment of temporal and political advantages for those of his religious sect. When we see him with all the energies of his mind, engaged for the meat that perisheth, and refusing with contempt that meat that endureth to everlasting Life, have we not a practical proof before our eyes of the want of a Reformation Society for all ranks and classes of the Church of Rome. There is one circumstance favourable to this Society that has not been touched on by my friends, which I cannot omit mentioning. We are told in the Word of God, "that when the fullness of the Gentiles should come in, all Israel should be saved," look then to the signs of the times, one of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, has this day made his appearance amongst us, and taken a very prominent part in the debate—he now professes to be a follower of that Saviour, whom his nation has so long rejected: may we not look upon him as an earnest and first-fruit of the restoration of Israel. To what class of Christians does he attach himself? Do we find him ranged under the banners of the Church of Rome? No, he proclaims himself a Protestant, and has shown you that the most eminent of his nation were employed in protesting against the corruptions of the Church of God in their day; that Abraham, Moses and Joshua, and Caleb and the Prophets, and even Christ himself were, in this respect, *Protestants*.

Mr. Gordon—I could ask Mr. Conlan some questions respecting his conduct on the other side of the water, but I do not think it is necessary, after what has taken place, to occupy the time of the Meeting further. I trust, after what has occurred, that there is not a single Roman Catholic within these walls who would suffer his cause to be disgraced by the advocacy of such an impostor.

The Rev. Mr. Newcombe stepped forward and asked him—Did you ever see me before, Sir?—Yes. Did you preach against the doctrines of Popery in the Baptist Meeting-house in Abbey-leix?—Yes. Mr. Newcombe then addressed the Roman Catholic portion of the assembly, and asked them if there was a single individual of them that would allow their Church to be desecrated by the advocacy of a person who had just admitted that he had publicly preached against the errors of Popery.

The Rev. George Hamilton wished to be allowed to acquaint the Meeting with some particulars relative to Conlan, which had come under his own observation. He was, he believed, the first person in Ireland who had detected his character.—(*Uproar.*)

The Chairman—I trust order will be observed. My Roman Catholic countrymen have not a more sincere friend than I am. As long as a Roman Catholic is an honest man, he shall not want a friend in me—nor shall he want my purse, if he require it.

Mr. Hamilton resumed—The first interview I ever had with this

person was at my own house. He called upon me and told me, that he had been at Maynooth, and was intended for a Priest. That he left that seminary, having changed his religion, and intended to proceed to Bourdeaux, for the purpose of joining a fellow-student who had also read his recantation, and was earning a livelihood by teaching English in Bourdeaux. I asked him what object he had in proceeding thither, and he told me he wished to perfect himself in the Hebrew and Syriac languages, in both of which he represented himself to be tolerably well versed. There was a Hebrew Bible lying on the table at the time. He took it up, and like all ignorant people, turned the book upside down, and said that he never saw a nicer edition, or better type.—(*A laugh.*)—I met him the following morning, and all I now recollect of his conversation was, that he said Dr. Doyle was a *White Jesuit*.

Mr. Conlan—The remark of my taking the “Reading-made-easy” [i. e. *Hebrew Bible*] into my hand, is as false as the other assertions; but if he (Mr. Hamilton) will put his hand on his heart, and solemnly affirm the assertion to be correct, I will be content to retire with obliquy on my back.

Mr. Hamilton then repeated the assertion, and said that he would stake his existence on its truth.

The Chairman—Brother Roman Catholics, this man who presents himself now to advocate your cause, you hear, admits has denied you on several occasions. I should be happy to hear one of yourselves come forward, and disclaim any alliance or connection with this man.

There was here a loud call for Mr. Finn, and after a few minutes that Gentleman came forward and said—My Lord, I do not pretend to say what the conduct of a Chairman ought to be in a case like the present, nor do I mean in the slightest degree to offer anything in the way of dictation to your Lordship; but if I had the honor to preside in such a meeting as this, and having heard charges of so heinous a nature, which affect in so eminent a degree the character of the individual whose conduct has occasioned these observations, I would, I say, allow that person in the first instance to speak in vindication of his character; and when he should succeed in clearing that, it would then be time to see whether he should be permitted to speak to the general question under discussion. I never saw the individual until yesterday, nor did I ever hear one of the charges made against him until this day.

It was then agreed that Mr. Conlan should be allowed twenty minutes to repel the accusations which had been made against him.

Mr. Conlan rose and spoke as follows:—My Lord and Gentlemen, —Rising up as I do, the wonderful phenomenon of viciousness and depravity, according to the statements of those Reverend Gentlemen—rising, I say, the object of the foulest calumny that malevolence could devise, or bigotry produce; after they have raked the calendar of crime in order to fasten the basest odium on my character, my bosom pulsates with the throbs of humanity, and with the keen sensations which, inflicted by the stiletto of detraction, wounded me to the core. I am charged, my Lord, with being a hypocrite, and the foundation on which this charge is laid, is because



I was a Protestant of various communions under that term, and preached against that Religion which I now stand forward to defend. As well might the Manicheans have charged Augustin with hypocrisy, because he once held their tenets, when the convictions of his judgment bid him to adopt those of the orthodox Church. As well, My Lord, might they say, "read not his works," as your Lordship and this assembly cry, "hear not this man." But the conclave of slander, with all the guile of their system and the craft of their character, have formed this combination of iniquity, in order to blight, by the mildew of detraction, all my energies.—They summon me before a jury sworn to convict me; they damn my character and my religion, without the sympathy of charity, or the voice of justice to be heard in my defence. Yes, my Lord, they have forged this base production, in order to mantle my shoulders with the greater odium—they have fringed that robe with all those names of degradation that can speckle my character, as a viper of the most pernicious class. They have associated my religion with my name, so that the streaks of honor reflected from the one may embroider the other. They have called me a stipendiary; but what is my salary? or from whence proceeded it? They have asserted that I was an emissary from that venerable Society whose name electrifies the nerves of a Bibleman—that I was an emissary to destroy social order. Heavens! let the perceptive powers of judgment's ken behold, in the absurdity of those statements, the refutation of the calumnies.—I have been interrogated with the authoritative scowl of a Star Chamber Inquisitor; my candour winced not from the questions, because the integrity of my principles enabled me to bid defiance to the forgeries of this pandemonium. I say, I questioned not the authority to ask me, though I could do so; I scorned to lurk in such a covert. They have murdered my character, if their assertions are to be taken for truth. If they considered me such a disgrace to Catholicity, why did not that man who has charged me before the tribunal of my fellow-citizens, and endeavoured, by one crushing effort, to chaunt the dirge of my existence—why did he not, when the press teemed with the news of my re-entrance into the Church of Rome—and that vehicle of slander, his auxiliary in the sacred work of detraction, endeavoured to sully my name by the basest imputations—why did he not then come forward and denounce me as a liar, villain, hypocrite, and every thing he has this day stated? No, he opened, from the diversity of opinion adopted by me from Bible reading, that my intellect would not long moor in the harbour of Popery. But, to his pain, his predictions have been fallacious. The Tullow proceedings have aroused his ire, and fearing lest I should expose the Augean mass of absurd principles that chequer the character of the Evangelicals, he says, " 'tis better to fetter him by this charge in the sepulchre of silence, where the grating tone of his language shall not sound on the delicate organs of Biblemen, nor develope to the thinking part of creation, the chaotic elements of their system." Such, my Lord and gentlemen, such is the forlorn hope of these proceedings. If, my brethren, I am to retire from this meeting without being heard

in defence of my religion, I shall retire resting on that Corinthian pillar which shall support me, while their bigotry murmurs in discordant whistling around my head. I shall retire with that superiour consciousness, which every man of integrity possesses in his bosom, that I have fearlessly this day done my duty to God, my religion and my country. I have been bearded by calumnies, lauded in the ribaldry of Billingsgate ; but the shield of honesty, buckled on my shoulders, wards off the Lernean-dipt shafts of rabid bigotry. I shall retire, having the balm of truth to salve the wounds inflicted on my nature and character this day. I go with victory—for their calumnies prove the wrathful struggles of an expiring faction. But you, my Lord, have hoisted the aristocratic flag of despotism—you have commanded me to lie still, while the poignard inflicts the deadly wound. You have ordered me not to speak ; your Lordship should beware ; you should tread timidly—"They who live in glass houses should not throw stones." You, to whose name and to whose family the lines of the Poet were applied by the best pencil that could portray the original—" *Nec vir honestus, nec casta femina.*"\* By this judge and this jury I am tried : judge ye the verdict.

When Mr. Conlan had concluded, Mr. Gordon rose and said, that if no other speaker presented himself, he would beg leave to move that the meeting adjourn.—(*Great uproar.*)

Counsellor Finn here presented himself, and said—I beg leave, my Lord, to make a few observations in reply to what has fallen from my Scotch Friend, if he will allow me—and he appears to be a very good humoured man—to call him so. A person would suppose from his statement, that Scotland was an Island of Saints in place of Ireland, and as the former was peopled from this country, perhaps she may have stronger claims to the appellation than the Scotch Captain supposes. He appeared to lay great stress upon the passages which he read from a pamphlet written by the Rev. Dr. Doyle, because that Divine denounced his flock for the crimes of which they had been guilty. I do not think that this is so unusual in places of worship. What are all sermons and exhortations composed of but denunciations against sinners for their crimes ? and even the records of the Bible Society itself, I apprehend, would furnish extracts as fully descriptive of the enormities committed by Bible readers as those referred to by the Scotch Captain.—We have heard England, the hot-bed of Bible readers, denounced as a howling wilderness, where every sort of crime is committed, notwithstanding that the people are in possession of this Book which it is contended will cure all evils. Now, fellow-countrymen, I would ask, with these facts before your eyes, is it fair for people unacquainted with us and our habits, publicly to state that there is scarcely an honest man amongst us, and because we are poor Papists we should be cut down and cast into the flames ?

Mr. Gordon—No, no ; I said no such thing. I give you—and I believe my Roman Catholic friends deserve it—a better character than Dr. Doyle does. The words I used were *his*, not mine.

Mr. Finn resumed—Perhaps if you examine the Statute Book

\*The character of the speaker is at once developed by the impudent falsehood of this allusion ; for from youth to age, the conduct of the Earl of ALDBOROUGH has been unimpeached, and unimpeachable.

you will find a better cause for the ignorance of the people than that pointed out by the Gentleman on the other side. How long, may I ask, is it since the statute was repealed which consigned any Roman Catholic Priest to death who was found instructing his people?

Mr. Gordon—Fifty-two years.

Mr. Finn—Well, fifty-two years; and yet the Gentleman who has just afforded me the information, makes it a serious charge against the Roman Catholic Clergy, that thirty years ago, just twenty-two years after the law had been repealed which made it felony to teach the people, not one in ten could read. I believe the Gentleman will now find that one in two of the peasantry in Ireland can read. I have heard that previous to the union between England and Scotland the Scotch were fully as illiterate as the Irish were at any period of history. But when the Union took place the Scotch became educated, because the United Parliament enacted a law which gave the people the benefit of education; but in Ireland, fifty-two years ago, a bloody statute interposed between the Clergy and their flocks, and what was the effect of a legislative enactment is now attempted to be attributed to the gross and wilful negligence of the Priesthood. But, my countrymen, it is too ridiculous to follow my Scotch friend further upon that topic. He says that Roman Catholics do not make any exertion to educate the poor. Is that the fact? There is a Nunnery within a few hundred yards of where I stand, in which from two to three hundred females are educated, both in morality and religion, and they are taught to return home and infuse into the minds of their families the principles which have been inculcated upon themselves.—Look to the works these children produce. There is no Protestant Institution, even in my friend's boasted Scotland, aye, and I will give him England into the bargain, can surpass them. These effects are produced by the exertions of twelve young ladies, and if Mr. Gordon would not consider himself sunk in the slough of Popery by visiting a Convent, and will accompany me, he shall judge for himself whether the facts I have stated are true or not. Nothing has occurred except in one instance to disturb the harmony of this meeting. We have differed, it is true, upon the effects which this Society are likely to produce, but we have differed like Christians and Gentlemen. I trust in the discussion which has taken place that we have derived a little more charity from each other, and I trust that my fellow-countrymen will long continue to cherish the kindest feelings for their neighbours, no matter what may be their religious opinions or sentiments. Mr. Finn sat down amidst general applause from all parts of the assembly.

Mr. Conlan again presented himself to the notice of the Meeting.

The Chairman however interfered, and stated that the time he demanded for his vindication had been granted, and as he sat down before the expiration of that period he could not be again permitted to address the Meeting.

Mr. Benedict Hamilton (Lord of the Manor of Carlow,) rose and said—After the able and eloquent display of ability in support and opposition to the measures submitted to your Lordship and this Meeting, particularly upon the part of Counsellor Finn, whose brilliancy of reasoning cannot be surpassed, little, I am *aware, has been left for me to add.* I conceive, however, I would ill

discharge the duty I owe the community as a member of Society, and the Established Church, to which I belong, should I suffer the exemplary characters who have supported such resolutions, and the persons composing this Meeting, to separate without offering my sentiments upon this momentous occasion—serious in its nature, as well as can be conceived at this side of the grave. No man, my Lord, can regret more sincerely than I do, the unhappy occurrence which took place to disturb the harmony of this Meeting within a short period, and although I fully agree with the spirit and humanity of the constitution and laws of England which declare all men innocent, charged with crime, until convicted upon clear and unquestionable testimony, yet, if the solemn assurance of one of the brightest ornaments of Society is deserving of credit, the individual who attempted to force himself upon this Meeting must appear one of the most despicable characters that ever disgraced human nature; for he stands convicted upon his own letters, and his detection by the Rev. Geo. Hamilton, as being the common deserter of all parties. No measures appear too hideous for his undertaking: he cannot be countenanced by any man, for he smiles but to betray; and sincerely, my Lord, I do congratulate the Roman Catholics who have refused to have their cause advocated by such an individual. The motives for which this Meeting has been requested, I apprehend, are to give the bigoted and irreligious an opportunity of forming a just sense of our religion, and the Sacred Volume upon which we are to erect our hope or fear of future reward or punishment, when before the throne of Heaven we shall appear to hear judgment “according to our works:”—to point out the errors of the Church of Rome, and to give the illiterate and unenlightened an opportunity of freeing themselves from the undue influence of Roman Catholic Clergymen—making a proper use of the faculties which the Almighty has been pleased to bestow upon each of us: to discountenance, superstition and Idolatry—and, from a correct version of the Holy Bible, to give every individual in Society an opportunity, if he can, of forming a rational opinion for himself:—measures, my Lord, so moral, apparently to my understanding, that I confess myself at a loss to know upon what principle they can be opposed by any being blessed with common intellect. Such, my Lord, appear to me the motives which have induced the deputation from our sister kingdom to appear before your Lordship and this Meeting to-day—motives, my Lord, as I humbly conceive, never to be sufficiently admired. In support of the charges against Roman Catholic Clergymen, and in proof that there exist many errors in the Church of Rome, instances of superstition, idolatry, and bigotry, innumerable, have been adduced and proved, beyond possibility of doubt; and, my Lord, though I have no wish whatever to wound the feelings of Dr. Doyle, I regret to say, and I proclaim to your Lordship and every individual who hears me, that it is manifest from what has been shown, he has been guilty of a dereliction of his duty to the Roman Catholicity immediately under his care—of impiety! and that he has resorted to measures beneath the dignity of a moral character, to establish a supposed right to worship Angels, by having quoted part of the last chapter of Saint John’s Revelations, where, John says, “that having heard such things, I fell down to worship at the feet of the Angel,” and having

*suppressed* the subsequent explanatory verse, wherein the Angel says to him "see thou do it not, I am thy fellow servant, worship God." I am not competent, my Lord, to enter into theological reasoning ; but having expressed my opinion, from what I have heard from the enlightened Gentlemen who have spoken so fully and ably upon the character and conduct of Dr. Doyle as a Roman Catholic Bishop, I feel that I am bound to show the motives upon which I have founded such opinion ; and I may add, without possibility of contradiction, that the individual who suppresses—as in the instance I have already mentioned—any part of the Scriptures which in justice and candour he was bound to have quoted, such individual, in so doing, has been guilty of fraud : and I may apply the terms Idolatry and Impiety. The charge has been made in plain and simple language, that every man can comprehend ; the Sacred Volume has been produced to authenticate the fact, and no champion that has appeared to vindicate the conduct of the members of the Church of Rome, has had the audacity to attempt either to disprove or falsify the assertion. I must consequently take it for granted, the charge is established. I have to apologise for having thus long trespassed upon the time of your Lordship and this Meeting ; I cannot however, finally take leave of this subject, without offering a few observations upon what has fallen from a Gentleman who opposed the resolutions ; who, in language and temper not the most refined, has thought proper to be rather personal with the Gentlemen who formed the deputation from the other side of the water : he demanded who they are ? from whence came they, and what is to be their reward ? To the first question I answer, though I know them not, their education, depth of research, and appearance upon this occasion, if a doubt remained on my mind, are sufficient proofs that they are of rank and dignity. From whence they came can be of little moment—they have brought with them a strong and, I make no doubt, a sincere desire to raise us from a state of miserable bigotry, superstition, and ignorance—to engraft upon our minds a correct idea of the nature and efficacy of the inspired work, upon which, as I have already mentioned, we must all build our hope of salvation : and, with respect to reward, I answer they seek no pecuniary remuneration for their good works. But my Lord, when the messenger of Heaven arrives to demand a resignation of their existence ; when chained upon the bed of sickness, and the frozen arm of death is extended to extinguish the vital spark, a recollection of the duties discharged by them upon this occasion, will at once allay the pangs they might otherwise feel in their expiring moments, and enable them to meet with pleasure the exchange between an earthly and Heavenly existence : and finally, my Lord, when the cold and silent grave has closed upon their remains ; when the curtain of life has fallen, that must hide for ever from their view the sorrows and sufferings of this world, Oh ! may that Power with whom are deposited the "issues of life and death," return ten thousand fold, an act of mercy and kindness shown by them to the unhappy peasantry of this country—never to be forgotten while the breath of life can animate a grateful bosom.

Lord Aldborough was then moved out of the Chair, and the Lord of the Manor being called thereto, the thanks of the Meeting were voted by acclamation to his Lordship, and the Meeting separated.

*Finis.*





